

AN INQUIRY INTO THE UTILITARIAN TENDENCIES
IN THE ETHICS OF MISKAWAYH

BY

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page:</u>
ABSTRACT	iv
PREFATORY NOTE	v
ABBREVIATIONS	vi
TRANSLITERATIONS	vii
INTRODUCTION:	1
1. Introductory Remarks	1
2. Ethical Works of Miskawayh	8
3. Critical Review of Literature on Miskawayh	13
The Approach Followed in this Thesis	33
SECTION I: EXPOSITION OF UTILITARIANISM IN THE PHILOSOPHIES OF HUME, PALEY AND MILL	37-115
CHAPTER I: HUME: IS HIS UTILITY AN APPEAL TO REASON OR SENTIMENT?	38
CHAPTER II: UTILITARIAN RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF PALEY	73
CHAPTER III: MILL'S UTILITARIANISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS	93

CONTENTS (Cont'd):

	<u>Page:</u>
SECTION II: THE UTILITARIAN TENDENCIES IN THE ETHICS OF MISKAWAYH COMPARED WITH ASPECTS OF UTILITARIANISM IN THE PHILOSOPHIES OF HUME, PALEY AND MILL	116-187
CHAPTER IV: MISKAWAYH AND HUME	117
Reason as an Essence of Human Nature	117
CHAPTER V: RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF MISKAWAYH'S UTILITARIAN TREND: MISKAWAYH AND PALEY	141
CHAPTER VI: MISKAWAYH AND MILL: THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF MISKAWAYH'S UTILITARIANISM	161
CONCLUSION	188
APPENDIX: KITĀB AL-SA ^C ĀDA LI-IBN-MISKAWAYH: THE BOOK OF HAPPINESS IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY BY IBN MISKAWAYH	195
BIBLIOGRAPHY	235

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the utilitarian tendencies in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh by comparing them with some aspects of utilitarianism in the philosophies of Hume, Paley and Mill. It first sets a critical background of the works of Miskawayh and works written on the philosophy of Miskawayh.

Then it presents an exposition of three modes of utilitarianism, namely: the discussion of the role of reason in the moral philosophy of Hume; the religious approach in the utilitarian philosophy of Paley; and the social aspect of Mill's utilitarianism.

The utilitarian tendencies in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh are then examined in the light of this tripartite understanding of utilitarianism. The thesis goes into the details of comparisons and contrasts between each of these aspects and its counter-part in the philosophy of Miskawayh. The justification for the comparison being the multi-faceted philosophy of Miskawayh which represents an encyclopaedic attitude to knowledge in general and to philosophy in particular.

The thesis ends up with the conclusion that there are utilitarian tendencies in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh and that these tendencies are not uncommon or peculiar to his philosophy, since it has a Platonic, Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic background, which is a common denominator to all philosophies, Eastern or Western, Muslim or otherwise.

PREFATORY NOTE

Footnotes:

In this thesis works referred to in the footnotes are given in full in the bibliography with their date of publication and place of publication.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used, both sometimes in the text and in the footnotes.

A.U.:	Act-Utilitarianism.
F.A.:	Al-Fawz Al-Asghar.
H. wa Sh.:	al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil.
K.S.:	Kitāb al-Sa ^c āda.
N.E.:	Nicomachean Ethics.
R.U.:	Rule-Utilitarianism.
T.A.:	Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq.

All references to T.A. by Miskawayh are to the translation by Zurayk unless otherwise indicated.

TRANSLITERATION

In this thesis, I have used the system of transliteration followed in the Department of Islamic Studies, Edinburgh University.

I have also followed the system of transliterating the written Arabic rather than the way it is pronounced. This means that for the purposes of transliteration the hamzat al-waṣl is treated as a hamzat al-qat^c.

INTRODUCTION

1. Introductory Remarks

The quest for a reason ~~for~~ being moral or justifying moral reasoning has always been a problem in moral inquiry. Utilitarian thought is a mode of reasoning towards finding a solution to that problem. The argument for utilitarianism is that the rightness or wrongness of actions is determined by their consequences. But within this main argument there are different justifications for different ends, e.g., there is act-utilitarianism in which the consequence of the action pertains to particular actions, and also there is rule-utilitarianism, in which the consequence of action pertains to a group of actions or rules, universal rules (pertaining to all mankind) and particular rules pertaining to the moral agent himself, i.e., the individual.¹

There are also differences between act and rule utilitarianism; the former is described as hedonistic, egoistic and universalistic, i.e. it can be directed towards individual happiness (hedonistic) based on the interest of the individual agent, i.e. selfish-interest motivates the agent to work towards the interest of others because it helps in bringing about his own desires and ends (egoistic). The latter (rule-utilitarianism), however, involves altruistic, universalistic and ^a rational benevolence approach to moral reasoning.

1. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, V.8, p.206.

Utilitarian thought can also be divided into normative and descriptive. The normative ethics deal with problems of how we ought to behave, while the descriptive ethics describe how we actually behave. ¹

Miskawayh is a Muslim philosopher, a historian and a learned man, who lived in the 10th century. He does not write utilitarian or non-utilitarian morality, neither is it the aim of this research to make him a utilitarian. The aim of the research, however, is to find out the utilitarian tendency in his philosophy and compare it with three chosen authors in British utilitarianism.

The ethics of Miskawayh is, in general, a normative religious ethics. It tends to prescribe what ought to be done as a criterion for human behaviour, i.e. actions pertaining to human perfection, which is the essence of human nature. His aim is that moral behaviour should become a dispositional trait of character. ²

Although Miskawayh does not explicate his ideas in the same way modern philosophers go about it, yet he expounds his arguments sometimes in a syllogistic form and occasionally he refers to Plato or Aristotle, or quotes any of them to support the argument he is making. His first assumption is the teachability of virtue within human perfection of human nature qua human nature. This is a preliminary step to be taken by the agent towards attaining happiness. The utilitarian tendency is clus-

1. Op. cit., p.207.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.1 and pp.29ff.

tered round the concept of happiness. The aim of this research is to trace the utilitarian tendency in the philosophy of Miskawayh. This does not mean that we have to force a modern interpretation on the moral thoughts of Miskawayh; on the contrary, it is legitimate to research into medieval philosophy with an eye of modern scholarship. This will serve two purposes at one time: (a) it will revive the text, (whether it is Muslim or Christian, Eastern or Western); (b) it will benefit modern scholarship and serve the spread of knowledge at large. As to the compatibility of such research with problems of general moral philosophy, it can be argued that however developed the problems of philosophy are, there is still room for the ~~new~~ old problems to ~~drag on~~.
continue
to be discussed.

* * * * *

Miskawayh is said to be one of the great philosophers of the fourth century of Hijra (10th A.C.) because of his contribution to philosophic ethics in Islam. Indeed, the name Miskawayh has been associated with philosophic Ethics, for he is the foremost Muslim philosopher who tries to change the course of Islamic philosophy from logic and metaphysics, subjects which have been elaborately discussed by Muslim philosophers since al-Kindī, down to Ibn-Sīnā and Ikhwān al-Safā' (Brethren of purity) to Ethics. There may, perhaps, be some comparison with the Socratic Revolution which brought philosophy down from heaven to earth, i.e. from cosmological speculation¹ (a subject which had been tackled by Pre-Socratic philosophers - dealing with problems concerning the *

1. Sidgwick, H., Outlines of the History of Ethics, p.xviii. C.f. Kirk, G.S. and Raven, J.E., The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, pp.8f.

* p.4 is placed after p. 7

external world) - to moral speculation (Socratic), (questions of virtue, justice and piety), i.e. human study, study of the man.

Miskawayh's interest in the study of man came through a change in his personal life style. He used to indulge in the life of joy and pleasure, himself being a legitimate product of a period characterized by corruption and decline in moral values. Yet this same period has been described by Miskawayh in his Tajārib as flourishing culturally.¹ This seems to have been brought about by the interest of Būyid ministers and princes in different sciences, arts and philosophy. They also used to have special councils including poets, litterateurs, logicians, philosophers, grammarians as well as jurists. This contributed considerably to the making of the character of Miskawayh and helped in shaping his philosophy. His friend, the litterateur and philosopher, al-Tawhīdī, has written about this change in Miskawayh's life and career; he says:

As to Miskawayh (among other philosophers, logicians and litterateurs) he is a poor man among rich men, and a dumb one among prophets, because he is an extraordinary man. I gave him the commentary of Isagoge and categories. He is now in the company of Ibn al-Khammār (a translator, philosopher and a logician), he might see Abū-Sulaymān (a logician and a philosopher).²

1. Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, Vol.II, p.408. "He describes how ^CAdḡad al-Dawla, the Būyid minister annexes a special room for knowledgeable people to his palace."

2. Al-Tawhīdī, Abū Ḥayyān, al-Imtā^C wa al-Mu'anasa, Vol.I, pp.31-36.

Al-Tawhīdī also talks about Miskawayh's wasteful time spent in the life of pleasure and joy, and how he repented at last, and that he wasted some time in the study of alchemy, and that he was a greedy man.¹

The testimony for this change in Miskawayh's life style is evident from the pledge he takes at this turning point in his life with God, not to return to his previous life and to straighten his ways and behaviour. He has written this pledge down in a form of a promise between himself and God, and as advice to other people to follow suit. He summarizes this advice in a fifteen points programme, which sets the background for the general tendency in his moral philosophy.

This programme sheds some light on the general outlines of Miskawayh's moral thought. These can be featured as: rational, benevolent and socially altruistic attitude in a fifteen point programme. These features I propose are salient evidence for a utilitarian tendency which could be traced in Miskawayh's philosophy. The fifteen points are:-

- (1) He had striven to maintain what we would call personal integrity. This he defined as the preference (īthār) for what is worthy (al-ḥaqq), over what is futile in beliefs; for what is true over what is false in statements; and for what is good (al-khayr) over what is evil (al-sharr) in actions.
- (2) He had emphasized the continuous struggle that he needed to keep up between

1. Al-Tawhīdī, op cit.

essential manhood (al-mar') and his animal nature.

Donaldson missed a point here: that one must remember that happiness must always be obtained deliberately.¹

- (3) He had felt the importance of adhering to Islamic law (al-Sharī'a) and of recognizing the necessity of its functions.
- (4) He had endeavoured to remember agreements and to fulfil them, particularly any agreements he had made with Allah.
- (5) He had shown very little confidence in men, and this he accomplished by avoiding familiarity with them.
- (6) He had cultivated the love of the beautiful for its own sake and for no other reason.
- (7) He had appreciated the value of silence in times of agitation, until reason would direct him.
- (8) He had striven to continue any state of mind that was beneficial until it would become a habit.
- (9) He had approved taking initiative in things that were creditable.
- (10) He had found whole-hearted sympathy was necessary in order to work on any important undertaking without distraction.
- (11) He had felt that the fear of death and poverty could be counteracted by doing what was still possible by not being indolent.
- (12) He had shut out from his mind anxieties as were aroused by sayings of the base,

1. Donaldson, D.M., Studies in Muslim Ethics, p.123; c.f. Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, Preface, quoted from A Dictionary of Learned Men by Yāqūt, p.8

and he had tried to suppress his desire so that

(not at night, as it has been rendered by Donaldson, **ليلا** and not at night **ليلا**)¹

he may not respond to what they say against him.

- (13) He had come to realize that he must be inured to wealth or to poverty and to liberality or to contempt.
- (14) He had tried to remember times of sickness when he was in health, and occasions of joy and pleasure when anger was apt to arise, so that there might be less injustice and transgression.
- (15) He had rejoiced in times of trust, appreciating the goodness and confidence in Allah, turning his whole heart to Him.²

This programme indicates a change of style and behaviour in Miskawayh's life. Points (1) and (2) refer to this change in the form of conflict between the worthy and futile of beliefs, the true and false in statements and the good and evil in actions. Point (2) projects this conflict out in the struggle between his essential manhood and human perfection and his animal nature. It also shows that here Miskawayh has come to terms with: (a) reason and (b) religion (revelation). This has been made clear by Point (3) which refers to recognition of Islamic law and its function. The programme also shows that there is a benevolent attitude, as in points (13) and

1. Donaldson, op. cit.

2. Ibid.

(14) which are pregnant with altruistic qualities, although this seems to be marred by point (5), where he shows an ascetic tendency. However, this benevolent attitude has been further asserted in points (8) and (9) by a trend towards the useful which can be taken as a key to his utilitarian tendency.

2. Ethical Works of Miskawayh

1. Tartīb al-Sa^cādāt wa-Manāzil al-^cUlūm or Kitāb al-Sa^cāda

This book has not been mentioned by Brockelman. The book was published in two editions, 1917 and 1928, in Cairo by Sheikh Sa^cīd Alī Tūb-jī al-Suyūṭī. Arkoun rightly commented that such a philosophical work is turned into a sermon by Sheikh Suyūṭī's introduction.¹ No manuscript as yet has been discovered for the origin of the book. The theme of the book is al-sa^cāda al-quswā (ultimate happiness), and the steps to be taken by the educated one to attain it. The book is also an exercise in Aristotelian logic, which is used by Miskawayh as a tool for obtaining the requisite knowledge (hikma), for the attainment of happiness. In fact, the major portion of the book is concerned with the classification of philosophy and science.

Al-Suyūṭī's introduction is a collection of Sufi spirit-

1. Miskawayh, I.S., Introduction by Suyūṭī, Passim. C.f. Arkoun, M., Miskawayh Philosophie et Historien, p.108.

ual ethics concerning the description of the ultimate happiness (transcendental happiness), so to speak. The book has been rendered into English in the Appendix by the writer of this thesis. The translation does not include al-Suyūṭī's introduction.

2. Kitāb al-Fawz al-Aṣghar

The ethical part of the book can best be called the book of the soul. The book argues extensively about the existence of the soul and its immortality. It relates this to man's perfection and real happiness. Miskawayh represents the two substances body and spirit, by two worlds: al-^cālam al-kabīr wa-al-^cālam al-ṣaghīr, the macrocosm and the microcosm. The philosophy involved in the book has been described by Arkoun, M. as:

Le Fawz expose, en effet, des notions de psychologie et de métaphysique qui serviront de fondements théoriques aux positions éthiques défendues dans le T.A.²

The book is divided into three parts: part one deals with the proof of the existence of God; part two deals with the existence of the soul; and part three tackles the question of prophethood. The book was edited in Beirut 1319 and in Cairo 1325. It has been translated into English by Sweetman, J.W. as a part of his book, Islam and Christian Theology.³

1. Miskawayh, F.S., pp.163-167.

2. Arkoun, Miskawayh (320/325-421) = (932/936-1030) Philosophe et Historien, p.110.

3. C.f. ^cAbd al-Ḥamīd, Ibn Miskawayh: A Study of his Al-Fawz Al-Aṣghar. (A useful contribution for the psycho-metaphysical basis of the philosophy of Miskawayh).

3. Kitāb al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil

This book has been listed by Dr. ^CIzzat in his source book on Miskawayh among a group of lost works of Miskawayh, at the time he published his Ph.D. thesis on Miskawayh 1946. The book is available now in its Arabic edition. It has been edited and published in Cairo in 1951 - 1320 A.H. by Ahmad Amīn and Sayyid Ahmad Ṣagr. Ahmad Amīn, who introduces the book, says that the book was ignored by scholars, both from the orient and the occident, and that Muḥammad Ibn Tāwīt al-Tanjī found the manuscript of the book in the library of Ayā Sūfiyā in Istanbul. Ahmad Amīn was able to obtain a copy of the manuscript in Cairo. He refers to the book as the only copy available in the world.¹

The contents of the book comprise some answers produced by Miskawayh to questions asked by his friend, the writer and philosopher, al-Tawhīdī. The book is a display of the encyclopaedic learning of Miskawayh. The questions and answers cover a variety of subjects and disciplines, including some questions and answers on philosophy and ethics.

4. Rasā'il Falsafiyya

These are philosophical essays included in a collection by Dr. ^CAbd-al-Rahmān Badawī in his book, Dirāsāt wa nuṣuṣ fī al-falsafa wa-al-^Culum ^Cind al-^CArab (Studies

1. Miskawayh, Al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, Preface, p.a.

and Texts in the Philosophy and Sciences of the Arabs).
He includes two of these essays in his book.

- i. Maqāla Lil-Ustadh Abī^CAlī Miskawayh. Rahimahu Allah
fī al-nafs wa-al-^Caql? ^Cwa hiya jāwāb sā'il sa'al
^Canhumā wa-hall shukūk adrakahā fī al-jawhar al-basīṭ
al-q'āim bi-nafsihī.¹

This is an essay written by Miskawayh on soul and mind. It is an answer to a question and doubts about the simple substance which subsists on its own. The treatise sheds some light on the nature of mind and body and it also exposes Miskawayh's own way of philosophizing.

- ii. Risāla fi al-Ladhḥāt wa-al-ālām.

It is a 'Treatise on Pleasures and Pains', a subject which has been tackled by Miskawayh in his T.A. as well. The treatise is more revealing of the philosophical mentality of Miskawayh and it also discloses his ascetic attitude towards the question of pleasures and pains.

5. Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa-Tathīr al-a^Crāq

This is the main treatise written by Miskawayh in Islamic philosophical ethics and one of the most important works on the subject. It is translated into English by

1. Badwī, ^CAbd al-Rahmān, op. cit., p.57.

C. Zurayk.¹ It introduces philosophical ethics to Islamic philosophy and establishes the link between rational and revealed knowledge concerning Islamic moral philosophy. The book, although it does not reveal much of Miskawayh's originality, yet it is a reasonable compilation of Neo-Platonic philosophy. However it pays special attention to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics.

6. Risāla fī Māhiyyat^{yyat} al-^cadl li-Miskawayh

A Treatise on the essence of justice, published, edited and translated into English by Khān, M.S.

In an answer to a question about justice and injustice in al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, Miskawayh postpones the answer as he says to a brief summary in a separate treatise.² The treatise divides justice into three: divine, natural and positive. In dealing with divine justice, Miskawayh explicates that injustice cannot be attributed to the unique one (al-Wāhid al-Mahd). He thus alludes to the uniting power in man (meaning the soul) and attributes justice to it. As to positive justice, it has been divided into particular and universal. The universal justice is that which is agreed upon by all, and the particular justice is restricted to particular areas and particular people. Natural justice is the one existing in nature. The work is Miskawayh's own philosophy, with some underlying elements of Aristotelian ethics, especially the view of the soul as a uniting power of the

1. Zurayk's is the translation on which this thesis depends; it is published in Beirut in 1968.

2. Miskawayh, al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, p.84.

body.

7. al-Hikma al-Khālida

The book is available in both Arabic and Persian. The Persian title is Jawīdān Khirād. It is a collection of adab and hikma of different nations, Persians, Indians, Arabs and Greeks. Presumably the literature was available and accessible to the general public at that time, but Miskawayh had added the originality of combination, compilation and reconciliation.

3. Critical Review of Literature on Miskawayh

1. De Boer

This study takes a quick glance at Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq and gives useful but brief information about Miskawayh, the moral philosopher who initiated philosophic tendency in Islamic moral thought. De Boer alludes rightly to the fact that Miskawayh's philosophy is,

a contribution of material taken from Plato, Aristotle, Galen and the Muslim Religious Law, although, Aristotle predominates in it.¹

1. De Boer, The History of Philosophy in Islam, p.128.

Yet, De Boer does not refer to Miskawayh's personal contribution, i.e., whether he is an original philosopher or not. He, however, elucidates some philosophical points about Miskawayh's philosophy, e.g. the concept of good has been explained by De Boer as,

Now the good is either a general good or a particular good. There is an absolute Good, which is identical with the highest Being and the highest knowledge; and all the good together strive to attain it.¹

De Boer follows also the different categories of happiness and pleasure as they ensue from the divisions of the goods. The highest level of happiness pertains to the highest level of humanity achieved by different individuals.² He mentions that Miskawayh's social tendency would label his ethics as social ethics.³ However, if this argument is expanded, we can say that this social tendency has a teleological end in Miskawayh's ethics and as such may be called utilitarian.

De Boer also describes this social ethics as a cultivation of the love of one's neighbour in the widest acceptance. Obviously this is true about an ethical viewpoint which is basically growing in an Islamic background, with a broad view of love which endorses all mankind, since it endeavours to achieve the highest degrees of

1. De Boer, op. cit., p.130.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p.131.

perfection and the might that is man which depends on the Mighty Power of God.

2. Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā

Dr. Mūsā's book, Falsafat al-Akhlāq fī al-Islām wa-Silātuhā bi-al-falsafa al-'Ighrīgiyya throws some light on the traces of (madhhāb al-manfa^ca al-^camma) which can be translated directly to utilitarianism. He indicates that the Mu^ctazila show some utilitarian tendency in their rational approach to ethics and he alludes to the fact that in Islam Allah wishes happiness for all his creatures, in particular for man.¹ There should be no surprise if such a tendency recurs in Islamic rational thought of a later period. Dr. Mūsā considers Miskawayh as a social thinker of Islam, who believes that man cannot live alone. He calls Miskawayh's philosophy pragmatic thought.² But technically speaking, the word pragmatic has not been used in its philosophical denotation, i.e. he means practical.

Dr. Mūsā describes Miskawayh as the social thinker who devoted himself ^{to} for the study and attainment of happiness, not for the individual alone but for the society at large, i.e. mankind.³ He also alludes to Miskawayh's definition of character as a psychology of choice, or the effect of the will. This has been ^{supported} ~~confirmed~~ by a paper issued by the Faculty of Theology at Al-Azhar

1. Mūsā, M.Y., op. cit., pp.54-56.

2. Ibid., pp.84-85.

3. Ibid., pp.85-88.

University , 1935, that Miskawayh's dispositional moral behaviour is a reference to the work of the will and the work of the soul and its faculties.¹ Dr. Mūsā also centered his speculation on Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq; he mentions the classification of pleasures and how different pleasures produce different kinds of happiness according to the quality of the pleasure, i.e. whether it is of base or superior quality; again this can be paraphrased in terms of human or animal qualities or mental and bodily qualities.²

The different kinds of pleasures involve 'goods' which are useful and eventually lead to a happy end, whether it is a happy end for the individual, society or mankind at large. These are all utilitarian features and they support the claim of this thesis that Miskawayh's philosophy contains a utilitarian tendency. Reference has also been made to social welfare or common good as a legislative end aimed at by legislators; this is why he says companionableness has been an end of some of the acts of worship, like the aggregate prayers, the Friday prayer, hajj and the two ʿIds.³

Dr. Mūsā also mentions the Greek influence on Miskawayh and his selective reconciliatory attitude which makes it easier for him to accept the philosophies of Aristotle and Galen and mix them with Islamic law and thus produce a moral philosophy established on reason and

1. Jād al-Mawlā, Muhammad A. and Sheikh Salmān, A.R., Mudhkirāt fī ʿIlm al-Akhlāq, (1935), pp.59-60.

2. Mūsā, M.Y., op. cit., p.96.

3. Ibid., p.105.

revelation. On this basis, one can easily find a way to compare Miskawayh's reconciliatory attitude, as this thesis proposes, with Paley and the English utilitarians, who based his utilitarianism on a reconciliatory approach to morality.¹ Dr. Mūsā relies on two sources for Miskawayh's whole philosophy, Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq and al-Fawz al-Aṣghar. This, in itself, is not sufficient to cover different aspects of Miskawayh's philosophy. Since this is the case, it is a little unfair for Dr. Mūsā to criticize Miskawayh's incomplete thought. However, he does admire what he describes as his potential ability to have produced a more perfect philosophy having read his Greek and Islamic authors and having got the merits of both systems.²

3. Dr. ^cIzzat, ^cAbd al-^cAzīz

His work on Miskawayh was a Ph.D. Thesis presented to Fu'ād I University (presently, the University of Cairo) in the 1940s. The book is divided into two main sections: one on the life and works of Miskawayh and the other on the sources of his philosophy. Dr. ^cIzzat considers Miskawayh as the third Master, the first being Aristotle and the second al-Fārābī. The credit which Dr. ^cIzzat bestowed on Miskawayh was given to him for his contribution to moral philosophy in Islam, unlike his predecessors who were concerned very much with logic and metaphysics. The book is an encyclopaedia about Miskawayh's life, works and moral philosophy. It is invaluable as to the detailed information on the life, works

1. Mūsā, op. cit., p.116.

2. Ibid., p.120.

and sources of Miskawayh's philosophy. The writer it seems was overwhelmed by the efforts exerted by Miskawayh in the production of various books and treatises on moral philosophy. But it seems that he wasn't able to find 'al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil' at the time he wrote the thesis. This is why he considers the book as one of the lost works of Miskawayh. ^CIzzat's book, apart from the contribution it makes in the revival of the original works of Miskawayh and works written on him, is an important primary reference for the source of Miskawayh's moral philosophy. The book as much as it is important as a source book on Miskawayh, is less revealing concerning the philosophical contents and it lacks critical contributions. In so far as the second section of the book is concerned, which deals with the philosophy of Miskawayh and its sources, it looks to Miskawayh's debt to the Greek tradition, i.e. Plato, Aristotle, Galen, Bryson, and how they influenced his moral thought. The book, however, does not throw enough light on Miskawayh's moral ideas in their relation to modern philosophy. This it seems has left the door open for further study on the moral contribution of Miskawayh in terms of the understanding of modern philosophy.

4. Donaldson, D.M.

In his book, Studies in Muslim Ethics, Donaldson wrote a chapter on "The Manual Ethics of Ibn Miskawayh". This study is concerned with Miskawayh's main treatise, Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq. The writer rightly describes the book as, "the most important book on philosophical ethics in Muslim literature".¹ The writer deduced from the fact

1. Donaldson, D.M., Studies in Muslim Ethics, p.12.

that Miskawayh was in association with Abū al-Khayr al-Khammār, a Christian who had contacts with Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī that Miskawayh most likely had the use of Ibn ʿAdī's Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq. There is no doubt that this association existed since they used to meet at the Būyid's councils of elite and learned people. Yet this association does not necessitate Ibn ʿAdī's parenthood to Miskawayh's T.A., because: (a) they were both in contact with the available Greek sources; (b) the approach in the two books is different, Miskawayh tends to philosophize whereas Ibn ʿAdī's approach is more like adab and wisdom than it is philosophy.¹ Donaldson devotes some parts of the chapter to an expository introduction and some other parts to an analysis of the moral philosophy of Miskawayh. The analysis, however, is rather a brief summary of the main features of T.A.. Donaldson does not tackle the implications of the philosophy of Miskawayh, nor does he discuss the relevance of the philosophy to modern philosophy. He quotes Leone Caetani's remark that Miskawayh,

is not satisfied merely to collect material to set forth in chronological order, for he holds that all these events of the past were bound together by a web of human interest.²

This web of human interest is part and parcel of the utilitarian tendency in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh, the subject matter of this thesis.

1. Ibn ʿAdī, Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq, edited by Taqrītī (Cambridge - Ph.D. Thesis), Passim.

2. Donaldson, Studies, p.122.

5. Walzer, R.

In his famous book, Greek into Arabic, Walzer devoted a chapter to "Some Aspects of Miskawayh's Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq". The writer considers Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq as a major contribution of Miskawayh to Islamic ethical thought. He does not, however, consider Miskawayh as an independent thinker like Muḥammad Ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī.¹ Walzer considers Miskawayh as a compiler. He alludes to the dependence of Miskawayh on Greek authors like Galen and Bryson and that it is through their works that he was able to get to the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. He goes into tiny details about the classical Greek tradition scattered in Miskawayh's T.A.. Walzer refers to the educational element in the philosophy of Miskawayh and that,

He does not talk about himself from an urge to confess his faults but because he believes that his example will encourage others to exchange beduin morality for philosophy.²

This is not doing justice to Miskawayh's starting point where he states that his book T.A. is addressed to the learned ones. Yet, in so far as the Muslim individual is concerned, he would rather see to the fact that he gets his instructions and education since early youth according to Islamic Law.³ Walzer also looks into the implications of the moral philosophy of Miskawayh. He

1. Walzer, R., Greek into Arabic, 'Some Aspects of Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq', p.220.

2. Ibid., p.233.

3. Ibid., p.232.

mentions in particular the social implications of this philosophy in the concepts of human relations and friendship. He elaborates on this point as follows,

The analysis of different types of human relations and friendships in chapter 5 has among other things produced the result that there exists a natural social feeling (uns) in man which is the cause and principle of all the different friendly associations between men.¹

Walzer adds,

Now since it is essential to cultivate this inborn sense of companionship in man, it has been laid down by the Divine Law that man should practice religious worship in public and assemble in places of religious instruction.²

Then Walzer refers rightly to this social aspect of Miskawayh's philosophy as,

Miskawayh continues..., evidently unfolding an idea of his own.³

It is the claim of this thesis that this social idea which is Miskawayh's own philosophy, contains the seeds of the utilitarian tendency which can be picked out from

1. Walzer, op. cit., p.234.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Miskawayh's other works as well. Walzer does not forget to mention with regard to Miskawayh's ethical approach, the transcendental development of this social feeling into higher forms of friendship and love of God. ¹

6. Ansārī, M.^c Abd al-Haqq

Ansari wrote, The Ethical Philosophy of Miskawayh, which was a Ph.D. Thesis presented to the University of Aligarh in India in 1962. This work is a valuable exposition of the moral philosophy of Ibn Miskawayh. It does not, though, present a positive aspect of the moral ideas of Miskawayh. While the tone in the book is more explanatory than some of the literature written on the subject, yet in so far as the book is not directed to a real moral issue or problem in the philosophy of Miskawayh, its benefit must be restricted to its expository value. Ansārī wrote extensively about Islamic moral philosophy before Miskawayh; he also relates parts of Miskawayh's philosophy to the Greek origin. The book does not consider those parts of Miskawayh's philosophy which can be explained in terms of modern philosophy.

7. Dr. Şubhī, Ahmad Mahmūd

He introduced Miskawayh as the famous philosopher in the field of moral philosophy because he filled a gap in the study of Aristotle's philosophy left untouched by other

1. Walzer, R., op. cit., p.234.

Muslim philosophers.¹

Dr. Subhī thinks that Miskawayh's philosophy is a combination of different philosophies, that of Plato, Aristotle, Galen and Islamic Law (Shari^Ca). He feels that the original work done is ingenious, namely that of collecting, compiling and reconciling these different philosophies.² Dr. Subhī throws some light on the importance of happiness in Miskawayh's philosophy, in particular that aspect which should be looked for by man qua man, happiness as such should be attained for its own sake.

Happiness should also be attained for its relevance to the honourable thing in man, i.e. reason. He also refers to the teachability of virtue and the need for Islamic Law, Shari^Ca to prepare the youth for higher knowledge in later life, i.e. the knowledge which is derived from reason and will.³

Dr. Subhī, however, criticizes the philosophy of Miskawayh as being forged. He refers to the fact that it is a collection of different ideas from Plato, Aristotle, Galen and Bryson,⁴ from whose work Miskawayh quotes his ideas about the education of the young,⁵ not to mention his dependence on Islamic Law for the instruction of the young. The forged philosophy of Miskawayh Dr. Subhī

1. Subhī, A.M.I., Al-Falsafa al-Akhlāqiyya fī al-Fikr al-Islāmī - al-^CAqliyyūn wa-al-Dhawqiyyūn aw al-Nazar wa-al-^CAmal, p.130.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp.312-313.

4. Bryson, according to Zurayk is a Greek author, probably of the Neo-Pythagorean school and of the 1st century A.D. C.f. Zurayk Trans. of I.A., Notes 16, p.50, 1.2., p.201.

5. Miskawayh, Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq, p.50.

says, has some fallacious assumptions, e.g., Miskawayh's assumption that the Negroes are somewhere between humans and animals.

Subhī also criticizes the philosophy of Miskawayh as not being Islamic, i.e. it has little connection with Islam in the sense that it does not belong to Islam in its basic assumptions. It seems that Dr. Subhī here refers to the Platonic divisions of the soul into three as psycho-metaphysical basis for the ethics of Miskawayh. Thus Subhī considers the Greek elements as not representative of Islamic spirit.

However, Miskawayh does introduce the principles of Islamic Law (i.e. revelation) at various stages of his philosophy.

8. Arkoun, Muḥammad

Arkoun wrote a book on Miskawayh as a philosopher and a historian with regard to the contribution of Miskawayh to Arab humanism; the book is entitled:

Contribution a l'Étude de l'Humanisme Arabe
au IV^e/X^e Siècle:
Miskawayh (320/325-421) = (932/936-1030)
Philosophe et Historien

The approach is similar to the encyclopaedic style of Dr. ^cIzzat's Miskawayh: falsafatuhu al-akhlāqiyya wa masādiruhā,¹ but it is much concerned with the human attitude underlying different aspects in the philosophy

1. ^cIzzat, F.A.M., Passim.

and history of Miskawayh. Arkoun exposes the encyclopaedic education of Miskawayh and shows how it encompasses different sciences and disciplines, ranging from adab, philosophy and history to science and medicine.¹ He deals with the chronological order of the philosophical works of Miskawayh,² and the socio-political factors which influenced the development of his philosophy.

Arkoun tackles Miskawayh as a sage, philosopher and a historian. As regards Miskawayh's philosophical attitude, Arkoun deals with the literal consciousness which helps in the making of Miskawayh's personality, as well as the scientific curiosity which plays a role in the shaping of his ideas. The book, however, could have a different title if the writer deals with the author (Miskawayh) as a Muslim thinker, because Miskawayh was a Persian and not an Arab, to label his works under Arab humanism would deal a blow to his social Islamic thought.

9. Majid Fakhry

Fakhry classifies Miskawayh among writers like al-Tawhīdī and al-Sijistanī and ascribes a psychological dimension to Miskawayh's philosophy, namely the divisions of the soul and how they affect the super-structure of Miskawayh's philosophy.³ Furthermore, Fakhry focuses on Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq as one of the few systematic ethic-

1. Arkoun, Miskawayh, Philosophe et Historien, pp.207-23.

2. Ibid., pp.107-20.

3. Fakhry, Majid, A History of Islamic Philosophy, p.210.

al treaties, with a mention every now and then of al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil and Al-Fawz al-Aṣghar, forgetting about important minor works like, The Book of Happiness, A Treatise on Justice, two other treatises: one on Pains and Pleasures and the other on Soul and Mind. We cannot piece his philosophy together unless we compile these fragmental information from the above different treatises for the sake of scholarly clarification. ¹

Fakhry mentions the teleological end of moral values and how they are linked with the perfection of man; he says,

In the light of this teleological account of good and evil, it can be shown that to the extent that man is able to live up to the ^{ve}percepts of his nature, as a rational animal, he would be assured of happiness both in this life and the next.²

This is congruent with the teleological attitude which characterizes utilitarian ethics. I take this as a clue to the utilitarian tendency in the philosophy of Miskawayh. Fakhry also asserts the social element in Miskawayh's philosophy which distinguishes man from animal and refers to Aristotle's influence, i.e. the social element to him which distinguishes man (non-social) as either a beast or a God.³

1. Fakhry, op. cit., pp.210-211.

2. Ibid., p.212.

3. Ibid., pp.212-214. C.f. Aristotle, Politics I, 1253^a29.

10. Dr. ^CAyyish, ^CŪthmān Abd Al-Mūn^Cim

Dr. ^CAyyish wrote a book on Falsafat al-Akhlāq ^Cind Ibn Miskawayh. About five chapters of the book are devoted to exposition and commentaries of Miskawayh's philosophy and the sixth and final chapter of the thesis deals with a critical summary of Miskawayh's philosophy. In this conclusive chapter, he sorted out the main features of Miskawayh's philosophy. He summarized them in the following points:-

- (a) The essence of man or the 'know thyself starting point'.

This has been referred to in the philosophy of Miskawayh as the study of the soul and its faculties. The right question to be asked about actions is whether or not they conform to the perfection of man, i.e. whether they belong to the rational human faculty of the soul or the animal faculty of the soul.¹

When every creature animate or sentient knows the sort of perfection which pertains to its nature, he would try to bring it about. If he does the action accordingly then he would have accomplished the task which has been assigned to his nature and, consequently, he will get the happiness which ensues therefrom. Thus happiness depends on human nature. The kind of happiness which one attains pertains to the kind of perfection which one

1. ^CAyyish, Falsafat al-Akhlāq ^Cind Ibn Miskawayh, pp, 121f.

aspires for. This conforms to the proposal of this thesis to prove that this process of selecting the kinds of perfection to suit which kind of happiness and working accordingly, is a utilitarian tendency in the philosophy of Miskawayh. Man could obtain the highest degree of happiness because he is at the top of the hierarchy of creation, the best of creatures, a preference which is bestowed on him for his mental qualities and rational power.¹

(b) The social nature of man, that man cannot live on on his own without a social life that satisfies his basic human needs. This is also an essential element of human nature.²

(c) The Criterion of Morality.

The measure of human actions, i.e. their rightness or wrongness, is their conformity to the rational and spiritual qualities of man.

Dr. ^CAyyish also asserts the effect of ethics in safeguarding the social utility of the community.³

Dr. ^CAyyish also comes to some results, what he calls The General Aims. These can be summed up in the following:-

1. ^CAyyish, op. cit., pp.122-23.

2. Ibid., pp.123-124.

3. Ibid., p.124.

- (i) The attainment of the quality that pertains to the substance of man.
- (ii) The attainment of transcendental happiness through theoretical and practical wisdom.¹

What is Special About Miskawayh's Philosophy?

- a. It is characterized by a rational attitude, i.e. the study of human nature to determine the actions which pertain to the perfection of man.
- b. It is a moderate philosophy, not materialistic and not idealistic and the aim is the acquirement of virtue.
- c. It is cognitive philosophy, i.e. it depends on the perceiving and knowing of all virtues so that one can apply them accordingly.
- d. It is an elitist philosophy, only few people can choose to live by it and abide by its high demanding knowledge.

Here Dr. ^cAyyish forgets to mention that Miskawayh also encourages the teaching of Islamic Law to young people so that they can be brought up to bear the responsibil-

1. ^cAyyish, op. cit., pp.125-126.

ity of social life.

The trend then in his philosophy, although directed to self-betterment, ^{is} yet the generally idea ~~is~~ to build a model of a perfect man.¹

e. It is also a social philosophy calling for a full-fledged social life and shunning the life of isolation and desolation.

h. Morality and Religion.

The ^{provide} role of religion is secondary, in that it does not ~~lay~~ the basic assumptions of his system of morality. But most of the secondary customs and traditions are used to build up an overall rational system.

The Sources of the Philosophy are obviously Greek, but Dr.^CAyyish does not go into details.²

As a final word, ^CAyyish thinks that the Greek element in Miskawayh's philosophy should not delete the excellent qualities of his philosophy, nor his position as a philosopher.³

1. ^CAyyish, op. cit., p.126.

2. Ibid., pp.127-128.

3. Ibid., pp.128-130.

(11) Khān, M.S.

Khan edited and published A Treatise on Justice by Miskawayh; he also wrote a book on the contemporary history of Miskawayh. What is relevant to the subject matter of this thesis is Khān's conclusion that Miskawayh's writing on history was directed towards a utilitarian aim. Khān substantiates this claim by the fact that Miskawayh wrote history with an open eye on the practical ends of his writings, i.e. he tackles the use of writing history for a practice^{al} purpose, helped by the fact that he was in close contact with politics and politicians. He says,

Miskawayh wrote history with a utilitarian aim, but al-Tabarī had no such purpose.¹

What would worry any attentive reader about Khān's statement is that it is not well enough supported to stand for a conclusive evidence and is too general to be accepted as conclusive and final.²

Another example of Khān's generalization about Miskawayh's philosophy is this,

From his four available philosophical works Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq, al-Fawz al-Aṣghar, Jāwīdān Khird, and al-Hawāmīl wa-al-Shāwāmīl, it is evident that he was interested in philosophy and had read many books on this subject.³

1. Khān, M.S., Studies in Miskawayh's Contemporary History, p.20.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p.12.

Nobody is really interested in the number of books Miskawayh read on Philosophy as much as they are interested in his actual philosophy and the influence of other philosophies on his own, and this is what Khan does not tell us about.

Yet Khan seems to have realized that he needs some details for his generalization and this time he supplies this evidence for the utilitarian aim of history. He says,

Miskawayh suggests that the instruction received from history will be more practical than moral. He thinks that the relation between history and morals is inevitable and is also reciprocal. In his view, history is a practical discipline, and its purpose is purely utilitarian. Abstract ideas lie beyond his view of history. He does not deal with theological matters, nor with wisdom (hikmah) nor with knowledge (ilm) in the technical sense of these words.¹

It is obvious here that the term 'utilitarian' is used for some kind of legislative changes, i.e. something to do with the geo-political structure of society. If this is what Khan means, then this is a major argument between the subject matter of this thesis and what Khan unravels about this utilitarian tendency in Miskawayh's thought. Khan also hinted that there is a strong link between history - politics - ethics. Khan rightly concludes that Miskawayh was influenced in his writing of history by his moral philosophy. He cites the example

1. Khan, op. cit., p.22.

that Miskawayh focuses on (al-a^cmāl as-sāliḥa) good deeds as the sinews of history.¹

The Approach Followed in This Thesis

Although this thesis is not concerned with the sources of Miskawayh's ethical philosophy, some note must be taken of the more influential features of earlier works.

The philosophies of Plato and Aristotle furnish the background on which Miskawayh has written his moral philosophy. Miskawayh borrows from Plato, through Galen and the Neo-Platonists, the main Platonic dictum that, 'Virtue is knowledge' and 'Virtue is teachable'.² He thence devotes his philosophy to the teachability of virtue and lays special emphasis on the educational aspect of morality. To the Platonic tradition also belongs his transcendental conception of happiness, conceived as pleasure qua pleasure and as a human end detached from pleasure. The ultimate end, according to him, should conform to the divine model of happiness. As to Aristotle, one can understand how much Miskawayh owes to him, if one knows how extensively and frequently he quotes Aristotle, in his T.A., F.A. and K.S..³ Miskawayh is indebted to Aristotle in most of what he has written

1. Khan, op. cit., p.24.

2. Plato, Meno, 87^{c6-8}.

3. (1) T.A. = Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq, Refinement of Character.

(2) F.A. = Al-Fawz Al-Aṣghar, Shorter Theology.

(3) K.S. = Kitāb Al-Sa^cāda, Book of Happiness.

about moral philosophy or moral ideas, e.g. he quotes from Aristotle his concept of perfection, i.e. the function of man is for man to practise his perfection, which pertains to his human nature. He also quotes from Aristotle the idea of the 'good', material goods and goods as ultimate ends. This is linked with the development of the idea later to a complete concept of happiness, material as well as ultimate happiness. He also borrows from Aristotle the divisions of pleasures into human and animal,¹ and this seems to be the copy on which Miskawayh depends in his exploration of philosophical ethics.²

Miskawayh, however, adds his own Islamic contribution to that of his Greek sources, such as the relevance of Islamic Law to the question of morality, the problem of happiness and its relation to Islamic justice. The main fascination of Miskawayh in his writings about morality remains the same, i.e., reason as a faculty of human understanding, or human nature as a denominator to all human beings. It is from reason or the rational aspect of Aristotle's philosophy that he is able to draw the conclusion that human behaviour can be improved by education, i.e. moral training.

My argument is that the moral philosophy of Miskawayh is invested with a utilitarian tendency, which can be picked out in his work. This is also true of the Plat-

1. ^CIzzat, ^CAbd al-^CAzīz, Ibn Miskawayh, Falsafatuhu al-Akhlaqyyia wa-Maṣādiruhā, Bk.II, sources of Miskawayh moral philosophy, op. cit., p.362, 368, 372, 381, 382, 383. This section of ^CIzzat's book is invaluable as a source book for the Greek influence on the moral philosophy of Miskawayh. Miskawayh mentions in his I.A. Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics and that it has been translated into Arabic by Abu ^CUthmān al-Dimashqī.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., translated by Zurayk, C.K., p.81.

onic and Aristottelelian rational thinking which permeates the philosophy of Miskawayh.

Reference, then, can easily be made to the relation between the rational philosophy of Miskawayh and the main themes in utilitarianism, namely, the principle of utility as a mode of moral reasoning; the concept of happiness and its implications for the individual and for society; pleasures and pains as motivations and inhibitions for actions.

I choose three representative of classical utilitarianism, namely Paley, Hume and Mill. Paley represents the religious utilitarian tendency in the moral thinking of 18th century England; Hume is known as the father of classical utilitarianism, because he is a pioneer in using the utility principle as a mode of moral reasoning, i.e. a kind of justification for morality. Mill is the brilliant philosopher who gives flesh and bones to classical utilitarianism; he introduces the Greatest Happiness principle, which incorporates the promotion of the happiness of all, even at the expense of sacrificing one's own happiness, as an end of human action. This being an implementation of the principle of utility.

Three utilitarian tendencies, i.e., a) human nature as a justification for moral reasoning (Hume); b) religious utilitarianism, which refers the good of all and the happiness of mankind to the Greatest Utilitarian, God (Paley); c) Rational Benevolence as an end of the Greatest Happiness principle (universal hedonism) (Mill) - they all have their replicas in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh.

The method followed in the presentation of the thesis is as follows:

The thesis is divided into two main sections, each section contains three chapters. The first section is a critical exposition of the philosophies of Paley, Hume and Mill. The exposition is aimed at the elucidation of the issues of the comparison. The second section is a projection of the utilitarian tendency in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh in comparison with the philosophies of Paley, Hume and Mill.

The end and aim of the research is to probe into a new scope of the moral philosophy of Miskawayh. It is hoped that the research will widen the approach to Islamic moral philosophy, so as to enhance its role in the general enrichment of human practical thought. Philosophy is seen as a dynamic device for the achievement of socio-ethical change in a human society. Philosophy as such is considered as a living experience rather than a historical piece of knowledge.

SECTION I

EXPOSITION OF UTILITARIANISM IN THE PHILOSOPHIES OF
HUME, PALEY AND MILL

CHAPTER I

HUME

IS HIS UTILITY AN APPEAL TO REASON OR SENTIMENT?

In his Enquiry, Hume starts the chapter on 'Why Utility Pleases' thus:

It seems so natural a thought to ascribe to their utility the praise, which we bestow on the social virtues, that one would expect to meet with this principle everywhere in moral writers, as the chief foundation of their reasoning and enquiry.¹

This seems to be an indication that Hume will be using the principle of utility as a mode of moral reasoning. In common life, we use utility and appeal to the principle of utility as a criterion of accepted social virtue, i.e. we praise a man for his service to society and his public usefulness in general. Praise for a person can only be appreciated if he is fit for a purpose.

Hume also argues that even inanimate objects can be praised if they fit a useful purpose. Disproportion or deformity in the construction of any object will be disregarded if the object appears to fit a particular purpose.² There is a hint here that aesthetical qualities

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.46.

2. Ibid.

are appreciated for their usefulness. In other words Hume is saying that ethical and aesthetical qualities are appreciated by an appeal to their usefulness. Although Hume does not explicitly rule out intrinsic ethical values or intrinsic aesthetical qualities, yet having utility or usefulness as a criterion of ethical and aesthetical qualities, implies that Hume does not approve of intrinsic qualities as such.

Usefulness, then, is the sole moral and aesthetical arbiter, i.e. a person cannot be intrinsically honest, but he can be honest in reference to the purpose which he is fit for, e.g. maybe he is fit for keeping promises or not lying or because he is useful in keeping secrets whether they are private or public.

Architectural beauty can be superseded by the principle of utility; thus Hume says,

A building, whose doors and windows were exact squares, would hurt the eye by that very proportion; as ill adapted to the figure of a human creature, for whose service the fabric was intended.¹

Thus it seems that there is a compatibility between art and function, i.e. purpose or utility in case of aesthetical qualities, as well as there being a compatibility between human nature and usefulness in the case of ethical valuations.

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.46.

At the same time there is a kind of incompatibility between art and function in the case of unuseful objects. Unuseful objects, according to Hume, will communicate aesthetically a feeling of disproportion and disharmony to the person concerned. The same is true of human nature ethically, so to speak. This is why people who are hurtful to society are useless and they should be subjected to disapprobation, i.e. moral disapproval because they communicate feelings and sentiments of disgust to their fellow human beings.¹ Hume's endeavour is to prove that utility can be derived from human nature; he writes,

But it is not just reason for rejecting any principle, confirmed by experience, that we cannot give a satisfactory account of its origin, nor are able to resolve it into other more general principles. And if we would employ a little thought on the present subject, we need be at no loss to account for the influence of utility, and to deduce it from principles, the most known and avowed in human nature.²

As to how he is going to resolve the issue, he elucidates as follows:-

For granting that morality had no foundation in nature, it must still be allowed, that vice and virtue, either from self-interest or the prejudices of education, produce in us a real pain and pleasure; and this we may observe to be strenuously asserted by the defenders of that hypothesis. Every passion,

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.47.

2. Ibid.

habit, or turn of character (say they) which has a tendency to our advantage or prejudice, gives a delight or uneasiness; and 'tis from thence the approbation or disapprobation arises.¹

The advantage, then, of the moral feeling and its disadvantage to us produce either pleasure or pain. If the feeling is related to our self-interest, for instance, then it produces pleasure and consequently it gets our approbation. The opposite is true of prejudices, they produce pain and consequently get our disapprobation.

This at the outset seems to prove that moral feeling is derived from education. Hume, however, produces another argument to refute this view; he says:

From the apparent usefulness of the social virtues, it has readily been inferred by sceptics, both ancient and modern, that all moral distinctions arise from education, and were, at first, invented, and afterwards encouraged, by the art of politicians, in order to render men tractable, and subdue their natural ferocity and selfishness, which incapacitated them for society.²

However, Hume says that this is not the case because,

Had nature made no such distinction, founded on the original constitution of the mind, the words, honourable and shameful, lovely and

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, edited by L.A. Selby-Bigge, p.295.

2. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.48.

odious; noble and despicable, had never had place in any language; nor could politicians, had they invented these terms, ever have been able to render them intelligible, or make them convey any idea to the audience.¹

As to how moral distinctions can appeal to the mind directly, Hume in answer to this says,

The social virtues must, therefore, be allowed to have a natural beauty and amiableness, which, at first, antecedent to all percept or education, recommends them to the esteem of uninstructed mankind, and engages their affections. And as the public utility of these virtues is the chief circumstance, whence they derive their merit, it follows, that the end, which they have a tendency to promote, must be some way agreeable to us, and take hold of some affection. It must please, either from considerations of self-interest, or from more generous motives and regards.²

Hume is alluding here to utility as a first principle, a principle which is antecedent to all percept or education, i.e. a self-evident principle. By stating the principle of utility, Hume lays down the foundation of utilitarian philosophy which will be pursued by his successors.³ Hume was aspiring to establish a scientific experimental method in moral reasoning. His aim was "to state the principles of morality in such a way as to bring it entirely into the domain of science".⁴ This

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.48.

2. Ibid., pp.48-49.

3. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, p.22.

4. Stephen, L., History of English Thought in the 18th Century, p.87.

quest for the precise and the definite in moral reasoning has been expressed by Hume as follows:-

Now as perceptions resolve themselves into two kinds, viz. impressions and ideas, this distinction gives rise to a question, with which we shall open up our present enquiry concerning morals, whether 'tis by means of our ideas or impressions we distinguish betwixt vice and virtue, and pronounce an action blameable or praise-worthy? This will immediately cut off all loose discourses and declamations, and reduce us to something precise and exact on the present subject.¹

Hume, in trying to find a way out of this predicament, produces a lengthy argument to the effect that if all systems agree that morality is discerned by ideas and by their similarities and comparisons, then one here needs to see if reason alone is the criterion of moral good and evil.²

Hume adds that if morality is the practical aspect of philosophy and if it is supposed to affect our passions and actions then moral feelings cannot be derived from reason; he explains his viewpoint as follows,

Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is utterly impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason.³

1. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, p.456.

2. Ibid., pp.456-457.

3. Ibid., p.457.

Thus, in his endeavour to build a system of ethics, he sacrifices reason or at least loses sight of reason in most cases, e.g. at one time we are told that reason and passion are not incompatible, yet again we are told that only sentiments and passions count in this system of ethics. So the endeavour to enact a science of ethics boils down to a subjective system of ethics.

His quest for a method appears in statements like,

Men are now cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy and will hearken to no arguments but those which are derived from experience. It is full time they should attempt a like reformation in all moral disquisitions, and reject every system of ethics, however subtle or ingenious which is not founded on facts and observations.¹

Yet the facts and observations he mentions are nothing more than sentiments and passions, i.e. different states of human nature. Usefulness of actions (utility of actions) is not an invention of politicians, nor is it something that we acquire by education, but is rather an appeal to our natural affection, i.e. the faculty that determines whether the consequence of the action is agreeable or not agreeable to us.²

Moral values like honourable, shameful, lovely and odious are implanted in our minds by nature. It is their

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p. 7.

2. Ibid., pp.48-49.

public utility which commends them to us. Our actions should be directed towards justice and the welfare of humanity. According to this logic, Hume should not have considered self-love as the origin of the principle of utility. In clarification of this point he argues that sentiments of self-love and interest in public utility can be understood from the unity of the principle, in that close union of interest, which is so observable between the public and each individual.¹

If this were the case, public interest should not have been connected with self-denial. To base the feeling for public interest on self-love is to drift towards egoistic rather than altruistic attitude in morality, because of the apparent incompatibility of the two feelings. This is why public interest is related to self-denial rather than to self-love. Hume, however, asserts positively that we do not refer to our interests when considering a character in general, which may also refer to public interest, in contradiction to his first position.

He argues,

The good qualities of an enemy are hurtful to us, but may still command our esteem and respect. 'Tis only when a character is considered in general, without reference to our particular interest, that it causes such a feeling or sentiment as denominates it morally good or evil.²

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.53.

2. Hume, D., Treatise on Human Nature, III, 1.1, p.472.

Hume here is addressing qualities of others which cause, i.e. excite, good or bad moral feelings; one is forced to say 'moral feeling' because this seems to be what is meant by Hume's words... 'a feeling or sentiment as denominates it good or evil'. He does not seem to refer to moral qualities as intrinsically good or bad, but only their utilities enhance our approbation or disapprobation, but this time, approbation or disapprobation has nothing to do with self-interest. Qualities of an enemy if excited by self-love, would only yield hatred whatever they may be. It has nothing either to do with unity of the principle, i.e. union of interest as an enemy's interests are contrary to ours. If these qualities are not intrinsic in the person concerned, and if they are not excited by self-interest then the only option open for Hume, here, is to appeal to the rational nature of the principle of utility. The sequence of Hume's arguments seem to be leading towards that direction. At some juncture he argues that,

This deduction of morals from self-love, or a regard to private interest, is an obvious thought, and has not arisen wholly from the wanton sallies and sportive assaults of the sceptics.¹

This is a reference to utility as a first principle and a self-evident one (obvious thought) but it is geared to self-love and closely tied with the moral sense theory, i.e. the moral feeling is instinctive or natural since self-love is natural.

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.49.

Hume, however, at another juncture introduces utility as an open principle, i.e. not derived from self-love as such; he writes,

Usefulness is agreeable, and engages our approbation. This is a matter of fact, confirmed by daily observation. But, useful? For what? For somebody's interest surely. Whose interest then? Not our own only. For our approbation frequently extends farther. It must, therefore, be the interest of those, who are served by the character or action approved of; and there we may conclude, however remote, are not totally indifferent to us. By opening up this principle, we shall discover one great source of moral distinctions.¹

This is a step forward and a move towards an inclusive principle which caters for our own interests as well as those of others. But, is Hume, now, free from the attractions of self-love?

His answer is that,

self-love is a principle in human nature of such extensive energy, and the interest of each individual is, in general, so closely connected with that of the community, that those philosophers were excusable, who fancied that all our concern for the public might be resolved into a concern for our own happiness and preservation.²

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.52.

2. Ibid., p.53.

The link between self-love and public interest (interest of the community) is less obvious in cases when help and support is wanted by the community and not needed by the individual, i.e. there is no personal interest involved and one is not hankering after selfish needs and desires. In such cases, the link is not viable. According to Hume, however, the link is obvious, instinctive, or it pertains to moral sense and hence it leads him to conclude that the harmony of self-love and public interest leads to the unity of the principle which is the union of interest. Nevertheless, Hume does not rule out cases where the link is missing between self-love and public interest, which shows his quest for a scientific morality. He says,

But notwithstanding this frequent confusion of interests, it is easy to attain what natural philosophers, after Lord Bacon, have affected to call the experimentum crucis, or that experiment which points out the right way in any doubt or ambiguity. We have found instances, in which private interest was separate from public; in which it was even contrary: And yet we observed the moral sentiment to continue: notwithstanding this disjunction of interests.¹

Yet, Hume still insists that self-love is the origin of moral approbation and disapprobation and what we have to do in such cases,

We must adopt a more public affection, and allow, that the interests of society are not, even on their own account, entirely indifferent to us.²

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.53.

2. Ibid., p.54.

From hence we have to promote the happiness of society at large. This is a good justification on its own merit, but it may not be a good justification for a utilitarian theory.

Because in a utilitarian system, Rational Benevolence is basic to the working out of the system. Hume still has a claim to be a utilitarian; he argues,

If usefulness, therefore, be a source of moral sentiment, and if this usefulness be not always considered with reference to self; it follows, that everything, which contributes to the happiness of society, recommends itself directly to our approbation and good will.¹

And for Hume this is the principle to be counted,

there is a principle, which accounts, in great part, for the origin of morality: And what need we seek for abstruse and remote systems, when there occurs one so obvious and natural?²

There is also a glimpse of reason in Hume's argument for public interest or happiness of society at large. Here we are reminded that the force of humanity in us is so strong and so obvious. Hume, instead of making a reference to reason, articulately refers to primordial human

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.54.

2. Ibid.

nature as a source of morality. He writes,

Have we any difficulty to comprehend the force of humanity and benevolence? Or to conceive, that the very aspect of happiness, joy, prosperity, gives pleasure; that of pain, suffering, sorrow, communicates uneasiness?¹

Hume, by referring to human nature and the humanity of man, is hammering on the very rational aspect of utility which he attributes to sentiments and affections.

Thus he says,

It is needless to push our researches so far as to ask, why we have humanity or a fellow-feeling with others.²

To Hume, we do not have to bother about reason in such cases, because:

It is sufficient, that this is experienced to be a principle in human nature.³

If we ask, what then is experience? Isn't reason part of experience and isn't experience an aspect of moral

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.54.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. (footnote).

reasoning? Hume would positively answer,

The human countenance, says Horace, borrows smiles or tears from the human countenance.

Indeed it does, and we come to know this from experience. And Hume rightly supplies this example,

And if the effects of misery touch us in so timely a manner; can we be supposed altogether insensible or indifferent towards its courses; when a malicious or treacherous character and behaviour are presented to us?

It is a difficult option for Hume to bridge the gap between our own miseries and sufferings and those of others in the human community by an appeal to reason. But it is by reason that we come to know that man should not be humiliated or exploited by man. The difficulty in Hume's position is that his unity of principle will fail to cater for the feelings of oppressors and aggressors unless he is prepared to argue that they are irrational or lose reason when they commit acts of aggression and suppression, which will reduce the whole system to the idea of reason. This problem, however, cannot be considered apart from Hume's theory of knowledge. To Hume, the question of causation or reason boils down to the association of ideas and ideas are more or less a combination of human sentiments and passions. It is a circular process.

A serious objection to this group feeling as it has been



raised by Sidgwick, is that,

if the essence of "moral taste" is sympathy with the pleasures of others, why is not this specific feeling excited by other things besides virtue that tend to cause such pleasure.¹

Sidgwick quotes Hume's answer to this question that,

there are a numerous set of passions and sentiments, of which thinking beings are by the original constitution of their nature the only proper objects.²

However, Sidgwick retorts that the idea of usefulness is vague and the quality of sentiments needs explanation.

Obviously Sidgwick, here, is making an appeal to reason for such explanation. But reason, according to Hume, is a slave of passion. Indeed, reason and passion are not incompatible. Yet, Hume as a utilitarian cannot escape the grip of reason.

Hume's utilitarianism is considered by Lyons as a kind of rule-utilitarianism. Rule utilitarianism according to Lyons,

1. Sidgwick, H., Outlines of the History of Ethics, p.212.

2. Ibid. C.f. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Footnotes (1), p.47.

is the kind of theory according to which the rightness or wrongness of action can and must be determined by reference to a set of rules having some utilitarian defence, justification or deviation.¹

To test whether the utility of the tendency of the rule produces good or bad consequences, we apply the generalization test which can be formulated as,

What would happen if everyone applies the rule (observed rule R)²

in case of a set of rules, assessment can be made by this test,

What would happen if everyone observed R1...
R2... Rn...?³

The appeal here is to our reason and to moral rules and principles. Hume uses reason in referring to generalization of the utility of tendencies of actions and that they should bring happiness to the society as a consequence of their performance. As to what reason means in his moral philosophy, he explains,

1. Lyons, D., Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism, pp.8-12.

2. Ibid., p.12.

3. Ibid.

Morals excite passions and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason.¹

What are they then? Hume's answer is,

Reason can have an influence on our conduct only after two ways: Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it or when it discovers the connection of causes and effects, so as to afford us the means of exciting any passion.²

Hume claims that morality has nothing to do with matters of fact. He expounds this idea, saying that,

Take any action allow it to be vicious: wilful murder, for instance, examine it in all lights and see if you find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call vice. In whichever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions and thoughts. There is no matter of fact in the case. The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You never find it, till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action. Here is a matter of fact; but it is the object of feeling, not of reason. It lies in yourself not in the object.³

1. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, p.24. C.f. Hume, D., Treatise on Human Nature, p.549. See Tr. Bk.III Pt.I, sec.I, p.457.

2. Ibid.

3. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sec.I (Selby-Bigge edition), pp.468-469.

Hume wants to give moral feelings, e.g. vice, virtue, the same status as sounds and colours, which are said to be mere perceptions of the mind. By doing so Hume is hoping to establish a scientific system of ethics based on scientific observations. These observations according to Hume's account represent different states of the mind but they never refer to matters of fact. He says,

Vice and virtue, therefore, may be compared to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which according to modern philosophy, are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind.¹

Judging Hume by the modern philosophy terms which he chooses, the kind of science which can be established by these observations is not a science of ethics proper, since, according to him, ethics does not depend on matters of fact, but it can be moral psychology, in so far as moral feelings can be reduced to states of mind.

It has been said that the connection between factual and conceptual issues is much closer in the physical sciences.² But it is much more close in the humanities than in other sciences. Because the subject of human studies is man, there can be no distance between the subject and the object. Does the closeness of the factual and the conceptual conceal the factual from Hume's scientific observations, that he could see only subjective states of the mind?

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sect.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.469.

2. Mischel, T., Human Action, Conceptual and Empirical Issues, p.2.

The objection which can be raised against the reduction of vice and virtue into mere states of mind without any roots in reality and factual existence is that Hume's view is far too subjective and that he prefers to dismiss any link between moral qualities and the world of facts. A.J. Ayer seems to have been echoing Hume in reducing moral statements to psychological statements. The way he looks at the problem is as follows,

The supposed ethical problems are either meaningless or they belong to psychology and sociology.¹

Ayer in his emotive theory holds the view that a value judgement merely expresses, not asserts, a given feeling. The expression of a feeling is neither true nor false like a burst of laughter or a scream of terror is not true or false.² The difference between Hume and Ayer is that Ayer is refusing to assign reason any place in this kind of judgement whatsoever, whereas Hume thinks that reason excites this feeling.³ Nevertheless reason does not show Hume that there is a link between this moral feeling and a moral object which causes the feeling. It seems that both Hume and Ayer are echoing the Shakespearean verse in Hamlet:

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.⁴

1. Risieri, Frondizi, What is Value, p.71.

2. Ibid., p.68.

3. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sect.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.459.

4. Shakespeare, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, Act II, Collected Works of William (Cont'd)

Strangely enough, the empirical philosophy of Hume and the positivist philosophy of Ayer both have room for romantic morality. To be more precise, it is romantic in the sense that it is subjective and neither philosophers would not deny the fact that their views on morality are subjective, although they would decline to describe their philosophies as subjective. As a matter of fact Ayer admits the truth of Moore's refutation of the subjectivists, which says that,

if ethical statements were simply statements about the speaker's feelings, it would be impossible to argue about questions of value.¹

As an example, Moore elucidates that if two men were to argue about thrift, one saying that it is vice, while the other says that it is virtue, both of them could be right in their judgement since there is no reason why both these statements should not be true.²

Cont'd:.. Shakespeare, p.956.

Hamlet: "Denmark's a prison."

Rosencrantz: "Then is the world one."

Ham: "A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons. Denmark being one o' the worst."

Ros: "We think not so my lord."

Ham: "Why then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison."

Ros: "Why, then, your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind."

Ham: "O God. I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams."

1. Ayer, A.J., Language, Truth and Logic, pp.145-146.

2. Ibid., p.146.

Ayer, however, adds that Moore's refutation of the subjectivists, refutes his own subjective theory, but nevertheless maintains that his theory holds because he thinks that questions of value are subjective by definition.¹ The way Hume would go round the problem is to resort to the notion of approbation and disapprobation, which should conform to the principle of utility, i.e. the usefulness of the moral action, (object or subject), so that moral judgements can accordingly be accepted or rejected. Hume explicates as follows,

It has been observed, that reason, in a strict and philosophical sense, can have an influence on our conduct only after two ways: Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it; or when it discovers the connexion of causes and effects, so as to afford us means of exerting any passion.²

This is obviously not in agreement with Ayer's subjectivist view-point.^a Although Hume would say that reason here is just serving passions. Hume opts for moral qualities based on sentiments and passions and denies intrinsic qualities in moral agents such as a person being good in himself without being fit or useful for a purpose:

A person may be affected with passion, by supposing a pain or pleasure to lie in an object, which has no tendency to produce either of these sensations, or which produces the contrary to what is imagined. A person may

1. Ayer, A.J., Language, Truth and Logic, p.146.

2. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Selby-Bigge edition, p.459.

also take false measures for the attaining of his end, and may retard, by his foolish conduct, instead of forwarding the execution of any project.¹

There is room then for false and true judgements, depending on the tendency of moral objects to produce expected pleasures, and to fulfil the priorities of executing the project. This implicit reason would be a credit in favour of Hume's point of view as well as a refutation of Ayer's emotive theory. Jan Narveson, in his book Morality and Utility, speaks for the justifiability of moral judgements; he says,

The view that we are prevented, logically and therefore forever, from really solving ethical problems seems incomprehensible, especially since people sometimes do solve them. The view that they cannot be said to be true or false is at best obscure, especially since people talk as if they were true or false. And the view that people cannot literally contradict each other on ethical questions is simply incredible. Even if there were no currently available theories to suggest a plausible way of combining the undoubted truth that ethical statements are not essentially factual with the doubted truth that they are nevertheless subject to rational investigation, we could not remain satisfied with the curious view that they are not open to such investigation, which could mean that there is no point in thinking about ethical questions at all.²

This criticism is directed to the emotive theory which

1. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, p.459.

2. Narveson, Jan, Morality and Utility, p.7.

the writer rightly calls 'armchair investigations'.¹ The holder of the emotive theory is a logical positivist, and he stands firmly by his armchair investigations. This attitude has been exposed more clearly by K. Popper in his criticism of the positivists,

The positivists dislike that there should be meaningful problems outside the field of 'positive' empirical science - problems to be dealt with by a genuine philosophical theory. He dislikes the idea that there should be a genuine theory of knowledge, an epistemology or a methodology. He wishes to see the alleged philosophical problems as mere 'pseudo-problems' or 'puzzles'. He does not express his wish as a proposal but as a statement of fact.²

The position then of the positivist as far as ethical judgements are concerned, is more or less a wish to rule out ethical problems as philosophical problems and to shift them to the field of psychology and sociology.

Ayer, for example, holds that ethical predicates are not factual and that they do not represent any feature of the situation to which they are applied.³ As to the question of right and wrong, Ayer thinks that to say that somebody acted rightly or wrongly is not to say anything about what he did. And if you relate what a man did, to add that he was justified or unjustified is to add nothing to the story.⁴ The logical conclusion which Ayer

1. Narveson, J., op. cit., p.7.

2. Popper, K., The Logic of Scientific Discovery, p.51.

3. Ayer, A.J., Philosophical Essays, pp.235-236.

4. Ibid., p.235.

wants to draw is that to talk about moral judgements is to talk about nothing. However, he says that all moral theories are neutral as regards actual conduct.¹ The objection which can be raised against this argument is that the mere fact that there are different moral theories is a vindication of the fact there are different moral conducts, or else why should people talk differently about people's behaviour?! Supposing that I come to know that there are certain properties in murder which makes me feel a certain passion of disgust and hatred towards such actions, and supposing that whenever I come across such actions as murder and genocide I have the same feeling and passion, and supposing that I used the word vice to refer to such actions as murder and genocide, am I not justified in ascribing the description vice to these actions? If this is the case then the word vice refers to an action which took place in the theatre of life. If murder is just a passion then vice can be just a passion. As to whether the word vice describes the feeling or the action, we can say that it describes a murder-feeling, in other words, the word vice denotes a feeling towards murder, genocide, etc. and connotes the same feeling towards the same action, i.e. the occurrence of the feeling is inseparable from the occurrence of the action. The word 'murder' does not excite the feeling unless an actual murder takes place.

As to the question of the truth and falsity of the moral feeling, i.e. whether it corresponds to the actual occurrence of the action taking place or whether it does not, maybe by 'murder is vicious' I refer to a certain murder which took place in the past. To say that the function

1. Ayer, A.J., Philosophical Essays, p.246.

of truth is performative rather than corresponding to an object, is becoming a truism in modern philosophy.¹

According to P.E. Strawson truth is

a property of symbols, for it is not a property.²

To say that: Murder is vicious is true.

or

Murder is vicious is false.

is not to say anything about the subject-matter of the statement, it is just to add a further statement, i.e. a statement about a sentence. The phrase 'is true' or 'is false' plays no part, it is just a performatory existential meta-assertion, i.e. it says something about a given sentence.³ This concept of truth asserts and confirms a place for moral judgements in philosophy. The necessity of correspondence between statements and objects of thought no longer holds.

There is no reason why Hume should think that moral feeling lies in the self and not in the object, because according to the linguistic approach, "is true" is not a predicate, any more than "is good" or "exists".⁴ Yet if we take murder away, there will not be any feeling of

1. Narveson, Jan, Morality and Utility, p.3.

2. Strawson, P.E., Truth, Analysis, Vol.9 (1948-1949), p.84.

3. Op. cit., pp.87-93.

4. Narveson, op. cit., p.4.

vice as a murder-feeling. The moral feeling pertains to the action since it is excited by a certain action, as well as it pertains to the self, i.e. passions and sentiments.

Some logical empiricists think that there is no quality in the object or in the act, or even the person to whom we attribute the quality of being good. We only express or evince our own emotions. For example, they say that there is no quality in the used stamp that makes it worth our attention. It is the philatelist who gives it a quality.¹

As it is obvious, this argument is not representative of moral qualities.

What is moral about the collection of stamps? It cannot be said to be either good or bad. The justification remains absolutely subjective; only the philatelist can explain his motive. Moral feelings, as Hume rightly says, are excited by moral qualities of the object, act or indeed a person. This is why the quality cannot be evinced by us (those who make the moral judgement). If the empiricist wants to express a disbelief in moral qualities like Russell who says,

we call something 'good' when we desire it.²

1. Sidgwick, Henry, Methods of Ethics, p.86.

2. Russell, Bertrand, Outline of Philosophy, p.242.

It could, however, be argued that we also say "X is a good man", but we do not necessarily express a desire towards him. It is just a moral statement.

Moral qualities have indeed been adequately described by Aristotle as we have been told by Sidgwick,

Human wellbeing is essentially welldoing, excellent activity of some kind, whether its aim and end be abstract truth, or noble objects of rational choice apart from pleasure attending them; still all activities are attended and is a manner perfected by pleasure, which is better and more desirable in proportion to the excellence of the activity.¹

Here virtue which is the practical aspect of wisdom according to Aristotle is the object of rational choice. In some sense we can say pleasure is aimed at here as a tendency of the utility of the action. This is reminiscent of Hume's approbation or disapprobation theory; we have, however, to realize that there is a difference in Aristotle's theory between bodily pleasure and intrinsic pleasure, i.e. pleasure of contemplation, the speculative aspect of phronesis (practical wisdom). Aristotle says,

and every activity is completed by the attendant pleasure.²

Since contemplation is an activity, it is accompanied

1. Sidgwick, H., Outlines of the History of Ethics, p.55. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.1, Ch.4, 1095^a 15-20, p.349.

2. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.X, Ch.4, 1175^a 21, p.565.

by pleasure.

Hume nevertheless does not see any link between subjective moral sentiments and factual observations, yet it seems that the link does exist. Because, if we did not see or know murder, we couldn't have coined the term 'vice', which is the corresponding moral word. In other words, we owe our moral feelings and sentiments to inductive reasoning. In fact, Hume refers to the importance of reason in morality, in his Enquiry, and he finds this reason in the principle of utility; he says,

But it is no just reason for rejecting any principle, confirmed by experience, that we cannot give a satisfactory account of its origin, nor are we able to resolve it into other more general principles. And if we would employ a little thought on the present subject, we need be at no loss to account for the influence of utility, and to deduce it from principles, the most known and avowed in human nature.¹

Utility according to this account is deducible from principles rooted in human nature. Utility then is to be looked for in self-evident principles, provided that it is compatible with reason and human nature. Obviously by reason he means human reason, i.e. human judgement in morality, human experience; this is why it can be traced in human nature. Hume makes it clear that public utility of different virtues is deeply entrenched in human nature. This is really an intricate relation of subject and object, i.e. utility as a rational principle

1. Hume, D., Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.47.

and the feelings excited by utility as an indispensable component of this relation. Hume explains this relation as follows,

The sentiments excited by utility, are, in the two cases, (man and inanimate object)* very different, and the one is mixed with affection, esteem, approbation, and not the other. In like manner, an inanimate object may have good colour and proportions as well as a human figure. But can we ever be in love with the former? There are a numerous set of sentiments, of which thinking rational beings are, by the original constitution of nature, the only proper objects and though the same qualities be transferred to an insensible, inanimate being, they will not excite the same sentiments.¹

Utility does not only enhance feelings, moral feelings so to speak, it is also closely tied to feelings of approbation or disapprobation, i.e. agreement or disagreement. The principle of utility is acting simultaneously as a rational justification of the moral action (speculative - theoretical) and a way of bringing the desired end about, i.e. practical end.

Hume says,

If usefulness, therefore, be a source of moral sentiment, and if this usefulness be not always considered with a reference to self, it follows, that everything, which contributes to the happiness of society, recommends itself directly to our approbation and good will.²

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.47. *explanation between two brackets is the writer's.

2. Ibid., p.54.

Hume here moves from the narrow circle of self-love to the altruistic feeling for others. This is why the principle of utility promotes the happiness of society at large and thence whatever promotes the happiness of society is recommended for our approbation.

Hume asserts the clarity of the principle of utility as follows,

In general, it is certain, that, wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or converse about, everything still presents us with the view of human happiness or misery, and excites in our breast a sympathetic movement of pleasure or uneasiness. In our serious occupations, in our careless amusement, this principle still exerts its active energy.¹

As the purpose of Hume was to introduce experimental thinking into the study of morality, he wanted to show us that the principle of utility is an integral part of an overall scheme, i.e. the establishment of scientific ethics. Thus Hume explains moral reasoning as follows,

The only object of reasoning (reasoning about morals) is to discover the circumstances on both sides which are common to these qualities (he means the qualities that men call estimable or blameable), to observe that particular in which the estimable qualities agree on the one hand, and the blameable on the other, and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and found those universal principles from which all censure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.56.

question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success by following the experimental method and deducing general maxims from a comparison of particular instances.¹

But has Hume succeeded in establishing this experimental method? Let us find out the answer from his own words. At one time Hume was of the opinion that,

Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore are not conclusions of our reason.²

Hume in another place denies that reason has any place in moral thinking and he says,

No one, I believe, will deny the justness of this influence, nor is there any other means of evading it, than by denying that principle, on which it is founded. As long as it is allowed, that reason has no influence on our passions and actions, 'tis in vain to pretend, that morality is discovered only by a deduction of reason.³

He goes on to say,

An active principle can never be founded on

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.7.

2. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I., sec.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.457.

3. Ibid.

an inactive one; and if reason be inactive in itself, it must remain so in all its shapes and appearances, whether it exerts itself in natural or moral subjects, whether it considers the powers of external bodies, or the actions of rational beings.¹

He nevertheless adds later that,

It has been observed, that reason, in a strict and philosophical sense, can have an influence on our conduct only after two ways: Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it; or when it discovers the connection of causes and effects, so as to afford us means of exerting any passion.²

At this juncture it seems that Hume's position is inconsistent. In the first statement we have been told that morality excites passions and that the rules of morality are not conclusions of our reason. Yet Hume believes that the function of reason is to excite passion, in other words, the function of reason is the same as the function of morality; why then rule out deductions of reason in morality?

Hume tries to find a justification for not involving reason in the moral question, which goes as follows,

These are the only kinds of judgement, which

1. Hume, D., A Treatise on Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sec.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.457.

2. Ibid., p.459.

can accompany our actions, or can be said to produce them in any manner; and it must be allowed, that these judgements may often be false or erroneous.

A person may be affected with passion, by supposing a pain or pleasure to lie in the object which has no tendency to produce either of these sensations, or which produces the contrary to what is imagined. A person may also take false measures for the attaining of his end, and may retard by his foolish conduct instead of forwarding the execution of any project. These false judgements may be thought to affect the passions and actions which are connected with them, and may be said to render them unreasonable, in a figurative and improper way of speaking.¹

This is a rather sceptical account given by Hume about passions and reason. He feels that some kind of reasoning should be used in moral judgements but this so called figurative reasoning has nothing to do with reason. It is much more related to passions and sentiments than to reasons.

Yet again Hume tells us that passions may be erroneous because they may lead us to a wrong conclusion. If passions cannot be relied on because they are erroneous and if reason is not to be trusted, to what other method should we appeal?

The idea of erroneous passions leads Hume to think that people are not to blame for moral mistakes especially those connected with erroneous passions, e.g. being affected by passions, a person may think a certain object will produce pleasure but, instead, the object may pro-

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sec.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.459.

duce sensations contrary to what is imagined.¹ Such mistakes, according to Hume, are innocent mistakes and should not cause the person concerned any sense of being guilty. Hume adds later that,

For the very essence of morality is supposed to consist of an agreement or disagreement to reason, the other circumstances are entirely arbitrary, and can never either bestow on any action the character of virtuous or vicious or deprive it of that character.²

It is by reason then that we discover agreement or disagreement with a particular kind of action, in other words, approbation or disapprobation; this in turn could be what is useful and what is not useful, i.e. we choose to do or to accept what is useful or fit for a purpose and leave what is unuseful or unfit for a particular purpose. Thus reason is involved in this process of choice and selection according to the utility principle. If Hume uses utility as a mode of moral reasoning then the appeal is apparently to reason rather than sentiment, and if moral passions tend to be erroneous then how can we know whether they are erroneous or not? Could it be by reason?

If rational reasoning is an inevitable process for the principle of utility, i.e. the process of experience, then this appeal is naturally to reason. In contention against the indefinability of moral concepts, R.F.

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sec.I, Selby-Bigge edition, p.459.

2. Ibid., p.460.

Harrod argues that,

There is a danger that the presence of peculiar moral feelings, may lead us to argue wrongly, that the objects, the contemplation of which gives rise to those feelings are identifiable. ¹

As a way of getting round the problem Harrod refers to the use of the word 'good' (as an example of moral concepts), in disciplines other than moral philosophy. It is mainly used to mean, e.g., a good way of getting to a place, of opening a tin or as in craftsmanship it refers to an approximation to a perfect model; thus perfection here is relative to a purpose. Being good means good in serving a purpose as required.² This is more or less a way of bringing moral reasoning to terms with the principle of utility. It seems that Hume, by using sentiments, passions and sympathy as feelings of approbation or disapprobation, i.e. moral feelings, wanted to use them as a manifestation of reason in morality. However, the principle of utility adds up to something more than passions and sentiments, as it leads to a mode of moral reasoning; while on the contrary, if we approve of passions, sentiments and sympathy as components of moral feeling and dispense with rationality and benevolence, we shall get the means-end ethics which is the outcome of the utility principle.

1. Harrod, R.F., "Utilitarianism Revised", Mind, Vol.XLV, No.178, April, 1936, p.140.

2. Ibid., p.141.

CHAPTER II

UTILITARIAN RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF PALEY

Paley's approach to morality in general is a religious one. He resorts to religious prescriptive reasoning as a basis for morality.

He defines ethics as the science which teaches man his duty and the reason for it.¹ The use of the study of ethics is to the effect that the rules of life can always mislead men either through a defect in the rule or in its application. The rules which were then considered as rules of life are:-

The Law of Honour, Law of Land and Scriptures. These rules should not be taken for granted; the Law of Honour is designed by men of fashion to suit their own interests and for no other purpose; the Law of Land is resorted to by good citizens who are beneath the Law of Honour; as to Scriptures, they are not supposed so much to teach new rules as to enforce the application of rules.² The point then of studying morals is to avoid the blind application of the rule.

This religious attitude permeates the moral philosophy

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, p.1.

2. Ibid., pp.1-3.

of Paley and characterize his philosophy by: (a) religious virtues like piety, justice, benevolence and purity; (b) practicality of moral rules, i.e. rules are incarnated in actions like worshipping God in spirit and truth, doing as we would be done by, loving our neighbour as ourselves and forgiving others as we expect forgiveness from God. That mercy is better than sacrifice, heart is the seat of the devil, not reason nor ceremonial pollutions. These samples are illustrated by the example of the Samaritan and the cruel servant.¹

Paley does not woo reason and a rational approach to morality; instead he sticks to the scripture as a sort of standardized moral prescription. Yet within this kind of prescription there is room for rational organization and discipline. This is why Paley compares the study of ethics with other practical sciences where we can set rules and examples subjoined, e.g. Arithmetic, Grammar, Navigation and the like. His concept of utility is based on this concept of happiness; that

any condition may be denominated happy, in which the amount or aggregate of pleasure exceeds that of pain; and the degree of happiness depends upon the quality of this excess.²

The principle of utility incorporates promotion of happiness, expediency and it also determines the obligation to do action; thus Paley expresses the statement of the principle as:-

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, pp.3-4.

2. Ibid., p.10.

Actions are to be estimated by their tendency to promote happiness. Whatever is expedient is right. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitute the obligation of it.¹

It may be argued here that 'what is expedient' can be useful to the individual alone not to the society at large. Paley so far has not referred to others or society or altruistic feeling in any sense of the word, i.e. he does not answer the question as to whose happiness is utility directed. But judging by what he says, it can be shown that by the 'degree of happiness' or the 'quality of this excess' he ^{refers to} ~~implies~~ that happiness of a particular individual, but 'this excess' cannot refer to excess in the happiness of others; how can X refer to the quality of happiness which pertains to Y? Paley here leaves a room for doubt of whether he means happiness for others at all? This might well be considered as an indicator to a hedonistic tendency in his utility principle. Hume makes it clear that the utility which promotes happiness must be pre-empted by considerations of self-interest, or by more generous motives and regards, i.e. social feelings, philanthropic, benevolent attitude; this is why he makes it a condition for utility.

It must please, either from considerations of self-interest, or from more generous motives and regards.²

Paley, by considering self-interest as prior to social

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, p.33.

2. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.42.

welfare and altruistic feelings, is moving towards egoistic hedonism; what he is saying is that, in order to work for social justice, one has to consider what would happen to him if unjust rules are implemented. Like Hume, Paley considers these subjective feelings necessary for moral approbations or disapprobations. Unlike Hume, he does not approve of a moral sense position, i.e. the derivation of virtues from instinctive intuition. In his practical religious approach he uses self-love and self-interest instead of moral instinct and moral intuition.¹

How then does Paley tie up his egoistic hedonism with religious attitude? By reference to his definition of virtue we will be able to understand how he makes the connection between religious benevolence and self-interest or hedonistic morality.

Paley concludes the chapter on happiness by referring to the link between individual happiness and social happiness, he says,

First, that happiness is pretty equally distributed amongst the different orders of civil society;
secondly, that vice has no advantage over virtue, even with respect to this world's happiness.²

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, pp.5-10.

2. Ibid., p.19.

Obviously Paley is referring to a predestined distribution of happiness and a prescribed division of vice and virtue, i.e. a prior religious description. Thus he defines virtue accordingly as,

the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness.¹

He elucidates further, saying that,

'the good of mankind' is the subject; 'will of God' is the rule, and 'everlasting happiness' the motive of human action.²

Paley here speaks about the 'good of mankind' as a subject of virtue but he does not mention anything as to whether people can or ought to deliberate in moral action or moral decision. On the contrary, moments of deliberation take place as a result of accumulation of experiences and habits; this is why men may not always act for the 'good of mankind' or for 'the will of God', nor aim at everlasting happiness as an end. Instead they act from what he calls,

an impulse, which is the effect and energy of pre-established habits.³

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.19.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p.20.

One would argue here that a pre-established habit does not necessarily preclude the possibility of choice in a new situation and new circumstances. He cites an example of a beggar; would it be suitable to question his intentions for begging and our aim in answering his requests; and if we happen to ask the questions shall we still be moral?¹

But certainly one would try to deduce from the material condition of the beggar whether or not he deserves the sum of money one is going to give him, i.e. one would make a decision, deliberate and choose (either to give him some money or not) from different alternatives that offer themselves to him in deliberation.

What I termed 'accumulation of experiences', which Paley terms 'an impulse of pre-established habits', seems to furnish a background for a practical sense of morality in the philosophy of Paley.

He describes this experience as follows:

Having experienced, in some instance a particular conduct beneficial to ourselves, or observed that it would be so, a sentiment of approbation rises up in our minds, which sentiment afterwards accompanies the idea or mention of the same conduct although the private advantage which excited it no longer exists.²

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.21.

2. Ibid., p.7. (Paley here is quoting Hume's Enquiry, Sect.IX, p.326, (New Edition pp.113f.)

The utility or the use of what we are doing or going to do excites the approbation of the sentiment which makes it inevitable for us to perform the action. Utility then comes first. This actually complies with Paley's first statement of the principle of utility, i.e.

the utility of any moral rule alone constitutes the obligation of it.¹

But it also confirms the tendency towards egoistic hedonism as reflected in the idea of 'what is beneficial to ourselves' which implies that self-interest instigates the feeling of approbation. Self-interest as a matter of fact gives rise to selfish feelings rather than to benevolent altruistic sentiments which are the backbone of utilitarian philosophy be it (act utilitarianism or rule utilitarianism).²

To argue for an impulsive reaction to a moral action, though it is based on pre-established habits is to reduce Paley's position to a moral sense theory of which Paley disapproves. In other words, to speak in terms of moral sense is to say that instinctive moral feelings should come prior to deliberation and reason. Paley's justification of this egoistic hedonism in his philosophy is that: God is the greatest utilitarian, and He cannot be unjust; this is why He distributed happiness equally among different strata of society.

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.33.

2. Reference to these Utilitarian Rules has been made in the introduction to this thesis.

J. Plamenatz sums up Paley's religious utility as follows:

It is in God that Paley finds the conciliator of egoism and utilitarianism. Though Paley believes that every man desires only his own happiness and can desire no other man's except as a means to his own, he also believes that God desires the greatest happiness of the greatest number of men. Paley's God is the one true utilitarian in the universe for He desires men's greatest happiness for its own sake.¹

Paley's basic position is that: self-interest comes first and foremost as an essential component of our approbation, then he wrapped it up with religious justification to prove the universality of the principle, i.e. utility is not something to do with my own happiness or benefit, it has also something to do with others. What Paley wants to say is that, although every man is a land on his own, yet all are under the guardianship of God.

H. Sidgwick explains the connection between the utilitarian tendency in the moral philosophy of Paley and its link with egoistic hedonism and how they all stem from a religious attitude in Paley's philosophy,

A man may aim at the greatest happiness within his reach, and yet not attempt to explain empirically what amount of pleasure and pain is likely to attend any course of action; believing that he has some surer, deductive method for determining the conduct which will make him happy in the long run. He may believe

1. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, pp.51-52.

this on grounds of positive religion, because God promised happiness as a reward for obedience to certain definite commands; or on the grounds of Natural Religion, because God being just and benevolent must have so ordered the world that happiness will in the long run be distributed in proportion to virtue. It is (e.g.) by a combination of both these arguments that Paley connects the Universalistic Hedonism that he adopts as a method for determining duties, with the Egoism which seems to him Self-evident as a fundamental principle of rational conduct.¹

Would Paley then be a true utilitarian, having based his utility principle on self-interest and narrow self-directed benefits?

Plamenatz has this to say,

Paley's reconciliation is more mechanical and less plausible. It may be that the cause of virtue is further from his heart, that having, like James Mill, derived benevolence from the selfish passions, he is more concerned to keep their origins constantly in view. It is for this reason only that Paley, rather than Bentham or James Mill, deserves to be called a pseudo-utilitarian. Fear plays as great part in his system as in that of Hobbes.²

Is Paley really a Pseudo-Utilitarian? Paley himself was in doubt about the universality of the principle of utility; this is why he was wondering whether any useful

1. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, pp.121-122.

2. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, pp.51-52.

action should necessarily be right.

Paley, however, finds a way out in the following example:

It might be useful to rob a miser, and give the money to the poor; as the money, no doubt, would produce more happiness, by being laid out in food and clothing for half a dozen distressed families, than by continuing locked up in a miser's chest.¹

Paley goes on to give a more vivid example of a useful act which is legally wrong, (e.g. robbery), but would it be morally wrong to do such action, for the greatest happiness?

Paley's answer is as follows:-

It may be useful to get possession of a place, a piece of preferment, or of a seat in parliament, by bribery or false swearing: as by means of them we may serve the public more effectually than in our private station. What then shall we say? Must we admit these actions to be right, which would be to justify assassination, plunder, and perjury: or must we give up our principle, that the criterion of right is utility?²

According to Universalistic Hedonism, it seems that the

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.33.

2. Ibid., pp.33-34.

principle, so far, is working properly, i.e. egoism, or self-interest is self-evident principle. But, here, however, Paley seems to have reversed the order of the sequence, he considers self-interest from an altruistic point of view, deferring the benefit and the utility to others, the needy and the poor. He does not refer to any religious command, he is sticking to the principle of utility which he chooses as a criterion for the rightness of actions. This seems to be a genuine utilitarian trend, i.e. a true proof of the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

Now Paley's answer to the question he raised earlier, i.e. what to do in such cases, is this:-

It is not necessary to do either.
The true answer is this; that these actions, after all, are not useful, and for that reason, and that alone, are not right.
To see this point perfectly, it must be observed that the bad consequences of actions are twofold, particular and general.¹

The way Paley is going about the problem here is immoral, because the principle of utility goes beyond the limits of expediency, and becomes rather a justification of crooked means to attain the greatest happiness as an end.

Paley's answer that the actions are not useful is obviously wrong since the actions are actually useful,

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.34.

e.g., giving money to the needy is useful, helping the poor is useful, getting rid of the wicked and greedy is also useful; but the question is: how are we going to do it? As is clear from Paley's example we are going to commit an immoral action to promote the greatest happiness, e.g. robbery and even murder, but is he going to make it a universal law? Obviously he isn't because when the principle of utility is in conflict with a general law 'general bad consequence', like 'do not steal or theft is prohibited', Paley's attitude is quite sceptical. He would rather sacrifice the principle of utility than the general rule, because in his opinion, the government of the world is run by the general rule and it is not worth the trouble we take to get rid of a particular single individual who happened to be greedy or wicked.¹

Again, if we are going to make this a universal law then we've got to get rid of all bad people in the world, in order that good people would live happily ever after, i.e. everlasting happiness.

But this isn't going to be the case since Paley accepts the fact that the moral government of the world should proceed by the general rules. By moral government, he means dispensations which influence the conduct of reasonable creatures; not only that, but he believes that future rewards and punishments at the hand of God will be distributed by general rules.

General Rule then supersedes the principle of utility,

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, pp.34-36.

and general bad consequence override particular bad consequence, this being the mischief which is inflicted by the single action whether it is theft or murder on the part of the wicked person, a morally bad person, at the same time it is being an act of benevolence to the needy and the poor person.

What will then remain of the principle of utility in which he states clearly that,

Actions are to be estimated by their tendency to promote happiness. Whatever is expedient is right. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitute the obligation of it.¹

According to the principle those crooked actions are useful and consequently right. If the moral government of the world is going to rule these actions out as wrong and illegal, then the principle should be scrapped because it is not working any more. It seems that Paley's principle would label him as an act-utilitarian, as a matter of fact God Himself will accordingly be the Greatest Act-Utilitarian.

The statement of Act-Utilitarianism is as follows:-

Those actions which produce the greatest balance of good over evil in the universe.

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.33.

The action will be prompted in answer to the question:

What effect will my doing this kind of act in this kind of situation have on the general balance of good over evil?

Not the question:

What effect will everyone's doing this kind of act in this kind of situation have on the general balance of good over evil?

The example given by W. Frankena for the acts which will be included in the act-utilitarian principle is,

Telling the truth which is generally for the greatest general good.

However, Frankena expressed his dissatisfaction with the Act-Utilitarian principle because he thinks that it is immoral. The reason why Frankena thinks that it is immoral is the same one which makes Paley take refuge in the moral government of the world, i.e. we cannot make it a universal principle.¹

To support his dissatisfaction, Frankena quotes what has been said by Ewing about Act-Utilitarianism, as follows:

1. Frankena, W., Ethics, pp.34-37.

It is indeed difficult to maintain that it cannot under any circumstances be right to lie, etc., on (act) utilitarian grounds e.g., to save life, but it seems to me pretty clear that (act) utilitarian principles, logically carried out, would result in far more cheating, lying, and unfair action than any good man would tolerate.¹

If Paley's principle is an act-utilitarian one, it is intended to produce the greatest balance of good over evil in the universe and, if by 'doing good to mankind', he means to alleviate the grievances of the needy and have-nots, then it proves to be a failure. But Paley would not give up; he would rather shift the responsibility to God, the Greatest utilitarian, it could be added, Act-Utilitarian. God would keep the proportion of good and evil intact, according to him.

However, Paley is not in disagreement with what has been said about the act-utilitarian principle, namely:

Those actions which produce the greatest balance of good over evil in the universe.²

On the contrary, he stresses the necessity of general rules in making a distinction between permitted and forbidden actions. Thus he illustrates the case saying that,

1. Frankena, W.K., Ethics, p.37. (Quoted by Frankena from: Ethics - By Ewing - (New York: The Free Press, 1955, p.41).

Ibid., p.35.

The assassin knocked the rich villain on the head, because he thought him better out of the way than in it. If you allow this excuse all who act in the same manner, and from the same motive, that is, you must allow every man to kill any one he meets, whom he thinks noxious or useless, which in the event, would be to commit everyman's safety to the spleen fury, and fanaticism, of his neighbour, a disposition of affairs which would soon fill the world with misery and confusion; and ere long put an end to human society, if not to human species.¹

But certainly this kind of example is different from the kind of example he mentioned earlier, i.e. stealing money from a rich, greedy person and giving it to a poor man. An act-utilitarian would make this an answer to the question:

What would my doing this kind of act in this kind of situation have on the general balance of good over evil?²

It seems that the punishment of criminals is not a utilitarian end, because punishment as such will cause pain not happiness in the world. But it may become a utilitarian end if it leads to the greatest happiness or the over-balance of good over evil. Yet Paley's example is concerned with a legal case rather than a moral situation. Nevertheless Paley mentions this example to prove the necessity of general rules. By sticking to general rules and adhering to the Scripture, eventually he diminishes the role of his principle of utility in promot-

1. Paley, W, The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, pp.34-35.

2. Frankena, W.K., Ethics, p.35.

ing happiness for the good of mankind.

Perhaps Paley is opting for a negative utilitarian end, i.e., minimization of miseries rather than maximization of happiness and the good of mankind, which has been referred to by J.J. Smart as minimizing miseries, ^{i.e.} ~~is~~ one step towards maximizing happiness.¹

Smart gives the following example in support of his idea,

Suppose that we found a new university. We may hope that indirectly research will help to minimize pains, but that is not the only reason we found universities. WE do so partly because we want the happiness of understanding the world. But producing the happiness of understanding could equally well be thought of as removing the unhappiness of ignorance.²

However Smart suggests that negative utilitarianism cannot achieve an ultimate end. Because the minimalization of misery is one aspect of promoting happiness. If happiness is the ultimate end then misery cannot be an ultimate end too.³

In so far as Paley is concerned, the alleviation of misery is an end of the moral action but not an end of life; such an end, the achievement of which depends part-

1. Smart, J.J.C. & Williams, B., Utilitarianism: For & Against, pp.28-30.

2. Ibid., pp.28-29.

3. Ibid.

ly on divine grace because, according to Paley, God has already distributed good and vice equally or in good proportion. If negative utilitarianism, represented in the case of the alleviation of misery, even if one commits an immoral act like theft or murder, is not workable, then how about the utility principle in a religious context? Is it applicable? If not, can it go along with a religious attitude like Paley's?

It seems that utility, as a mode of moral thinking or a technique of choosing the appropriate decision from different alternatives, is not incompatible with descriptive religious morality. But expediency, as a means to an end, is not compatible with religious morality. In positive religions, an end does not justify the means, i.e. means and ends should be consistent and compatible.

R.M. Hare argues that an appeal to a moral principle is not a one-sided way of reasoning in morality. He illustrates his position as follows:-

It would be folly, however, to say that there is only one way of learning a skill or any other body of principles, or of justifying a particular decision made in the practice of it. There are many ways, and I have tried to make the above account sufficiently general to cover all of them. It is sometimes said by writers on morals that we have to justify an act by reference to its effects, and that we tell which effects are to be sought, which avoided, by reference to some principle. Such a theory is that of utilitarians, who bid us look at the effects, and examine these in the light of the principle of utility, to see which effects would

maximize pleasure.¹

Hare continues the argument to the effect that a single principle is not the sole effect of our decisions; there is a long series of principles and effects which help bring the decision about till they end up with a first principle or a way of life in which other principles and effects are incorporated; he says,

Thus a complete justification of a decision would consist of a complete account of its effects, together with a complete account of the principles which it observed, and the effects of observing those principles -, of course, it is the effects (what obeying them in fact consists in) which give content to the principles too. Thus, if pressed to justify a decision completely, we have to give a complete specification of the way of life of which it is a part. This complete specification it is impossible in practice to give; the nearest attempts are those given by the great religions, especially those which can point to historical persons who carried out the way of life in practice.²

Hare's analysis supports the argument I make that utility, as a mode of moral thinking or a technique for choosing decisions from different alternatives, is not incompatible with religious morality, since these decisions are incorporated in the basic principle or basic belief or basic way of life.

1. Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, p.68.

2. Ibid., p.69.

Hare concludes his argument as follows:-

If the inquirer still goes on asking 'But why should I live like that?' then there is no further answer to give him, because we have already, ex hypothesi, said everything that could be included in this further answer. We can only ask him to make up his own mind which way he ought to live; for in the end everything rests upon such a decision of principle.¹

So far as Paley's philosophy is concerned, his principle of utility is controllable by an overall guiding Scripture which in turn is controlled by the Greatest Utilitarian, God.

1. Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, p.69.

CHAPTER III

MILL'S UTILITARIANISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The line of philosophy which is followed by Mill has been established by Bentham before him, i.e. the utility principle and the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Bentham considers utility as a first principle, because his morality is directed towards the observable facts, i.e. he was aiming at a scientific approach to morality. It was natural then for Bentham to start his approach with a self-evident principle, a first principle. For Bentham, utility is that principle. B. Russell, talking about immediate knowledge and knowledge required by experience, says,

When anything is known immediately, its existence is known by experience alone, when anything is proved to exist, without being known immediately, both experience and a priori principles must be required in the proof.¹

Utility, then, is also an a priori knowledge, i.e. it is a principle which we appeal to in our moral reasoning, which is identical to Hume's function of utility, i.e. a mode of moral reasoning.² Coincidentally, both Bentham and Hume accept the scientific approach to morality; the difference is that Hume's approach does not recognize reason as a motivation behind moral approb-

1. Russell, B., The Problems of Philosophy, p.42.

2. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, p.86.

ation or disapprobation, whereas Bentham considers the principle of utility as a device for obtaining moral happiness and a standard of moral rightness as such! Thus for him, utility is the rationale of morality.

As to Mill, the principle of utility is based on the Benthamite dictum that,

human nature is governed by pain and pleasure.²

He used it to deduce his final statement of the principle of utility as,

The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, utility, or the greatest happiness principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain: by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.³

The objective of the action, i.e. the consequence of the action is happiness. Happiness, then, is the end of human action.

1. Bentham, J., An Introduction to the Principles of Morals & Legislation, pp.11-12.

2. Ibid., p.11.

3. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.257.

According to Mill's statement, happiness means,

Pleasure and the absence of pain.

The problems raised by Mill's principle of utility are: (a) happiness as a criterion of rightness or wrongness of actions; (b) the rightness or wrongness of actions is to be judged by their consequences; (c) pleasure as a component of happiness is also problematic, in the sense that it needs redefining, as to whether it is sensual or mental qualitatively, and how much of it quantitatively would qualify for the greatest happiness. Again, how can we measure the quantity of pleasure, the mental one, in individual as well as collective cases?

As to problem (a), if happiness is supposed to be an end of the principle then it has got to be a final end for the validity of the principle, i.e. an end for its own sake. B. Russell produces an argument in that direction, i.e. the useful end; he argues,

If something is useful it must be useful because it secures some end, the end must, if I have gone far enough, be valuable on its own account, and not merely because it is useful for some further end. Thus all judgments as to what is useful depend upon judgments as to what has value on its own account.¹

1. Russell, B., Problems of Philosophy, p.42.

Mill's argument is more or less the same as that of Russell's. D.P. Dryer formulates Mill's principle of utility as follows:

The main principle which Mill maintains is that something should be done if and only if it would cause more happiness than would any alternative, and that something should not be done if and only if it would fail to cause as much happiness as would some alternative.¹

This is really in congruence with Mill's own words in answer to the critics of the principle, he elucidates that the principle of utility does not preclude the existence of other subordinate principles, i.e. other alternatives to govern the complexity of human society, he says,

The proposition that happiness is the end and aim of morality, does not mean that no road ought to be laid down to that goal, or that persons going thither should not be advised to take one direction rather than another.²

Then Mill emphasizes the necessity of subordinate principles,

Whatever we adopt as the fundamental principle of morality, we require subordinate principles to apply it by, the impossibility of

1. D.P. Dryer, "Mill's Utilitarianism", in Collected Works of J.S. Mill, pp.VM-X, edited by J.M. Robson.

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.276, ed. by M. Warnock.

doing without them, being common to all systems, can afford no argument any one in particular, but gravely to argue as if no such secondary principles could be had, and as if mankind had remained till now, and always must remain, without drawing any general conclusions from the experience of human life, is as high a pitch, I think as absurdity has ever reached in philosophical controversy.¹

To say that happiness is an end, and a consequence of an action, is tantamount to saying that it is useful for its own sake and that the action and the only action that should be done is that action which is conducive to happiness more than any other alternative. But actions are not always done for their ends or consequences, nor are ends and consequences always aimed at because they are conducive to happiness. The promotion of happiness is not determinant in the doing of actions, i.e. the rightness or wrongness of the actions. Frondizi questions the apprehension of values as it is conceived by the utility principle he writes,

Do we really perceive values at first sight and in their entirety? Are they really transparent. Are they revealed to us through emotional intuition?²

In case of Mill's utility the principle is a self-evident and a priori, but it is the kind of knowledge which Russell speaks of as partly known immediately and partly by experience; this is why it can not be completely intuitive, though it can be partly intuitive and partly

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.276-277.

2. Frondizi, What is Value, p.33.

empirical depending on past human experience and present moral observation. Frondizi goes on to say,

The utility of an object cannot be apprehended without a prior concept of the purpose which it is to fulfill, and the manner in which it fulfills it.¹

The purpose of Mill's utility principle is obviously to increase the amount of happiness and decrease pains. The way to bring it about is to achieve a certain amount of tranquility and excitement in the society.²

In answer to problem (b), whether actions are judged by consequences or, in other words, the justifiability of moral rules and practices, it can be argued that provided that we know the practical aspect of experience, how can we guarantee the rightness or wrongness of a practical experience by this self-evident a priori principle?

D.P. Dryer explains the rightness and wrongness of actions in Mill's utilitarianism as follows,

From his main principle in turn Mill draws a conclusion about what it would be right to do and what it would be wrong to do. The question of whether it would be right or wrong to do a certain action is a question about its morality. Mill writes, "the morality of an individual action is a question ... of the application of a law to an individual case."* He thus holds that it would be wrong to do a certain action only if it would be at variance with a certain rule. If we ask what sort of rule he is referring to, Mill makes

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.256-278.

* This quotation is from Mill's Utilitarianism, p.253, edited by M. Warnock.

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.256-278.

it clear that he means a rule should generally be observed. By his main principle Mill has already given a general answer to what should be done. In accordance with it he holds that a certain rule is one that should generally be observed if and only if its general observance would cause more happiness than would any alternative to its general observance.¹

Mill's actual statement, however, is as follows:

The intuitive, no less than what may be termed the inductive, school of ethics, insists on the necessity of general laws. They both agree that the morality of an individual action is not a question of direct perception, but of the application of the law to an individual case.²

From these accounts on the importance of rule, Mill seems to be moving towards Rule-Utilitarianism, i.e. he emphasizes the centrality of rules and that we appeal to a rule by asking what particular action will have the best consequences in a particular situation.³ Utility then endorses a rule and not a direct perception of the situation; this provides room for experience and previous knowledge, i.e. the application of the rule needs some knowledge of previous practices in similar as well as different circumstances.

What then is the function of happiness in a rule-utilit-

1. Dryer, D.P., "Mill's Utilitarianism", from Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society, ed. by J.M. Robson, pp.LXIV-LXV.

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.252-253.

3. Frankena, W.K., Ethics, p.39.

arian theory and where is the place of utility in the theory, and what is its relation to happiness?

Hume, for instance, advocates self-interest as a basis for moral approbation or disapprobation, yet the agreeable end is achieved through the agreement of collective affections. Thus Hume writes,

The social virtues must, therefore, be allowed to have a natural beauty and amiableness, which, at first, antecedent to all percept of education, recommends to the esteem of uninstructed mankind, and engages their affections. And as the public utility of these virtues is the chief circumstance, whence they derive their merit, it follows, that the end, which they have a tendency to promote, must be some way agreeable to us, and take hold of some natural affection. It must please, either from considerations of self-interest, or from more generous motives and regards.¹

Hume's viewpoint can be compared with Bentham and James Mill's conception of the best society, in which the aggregate of collective wishes is based on the harmony of selfish desires and interests, individual wishes so to speak.² That is to say, they agree on a kind of egoistic hedonism at the heart of their utilitarian philosophies.

John Mill, however, is a universalistic hedonist,³ in

1. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, pp.48-49.

2. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, p.10.

3. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, pp.412-413.

that his utility principle is addressed to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. As to how is he able to reconcile the collective happiness with individual happiness, however, the problem being: from the fact that I desire my own happiness, how come I can also desire the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Mill solves the problem by what has been suggested by Sidgwick as Rational Benevolence, which is part of the reasoning for universalistic hedonism.

It can also be said that part of the usefulness pertaining to the individual is educational, i.e. to cultivate the nobleness of his character, in other words, to consider the greatest happiness of others as part and parcel of his own happiness. Mill elucidates this part of happiness as,

Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit.¹

Mill goes on to expound the nature of the Greatest Happiness principle; he says,

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.262.

all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who in their opportunities of experience, which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison.¹

Up to this end, Mill describes the Greatest Happiness as: an ultimate end, desirable (individually and socially), exempt from pain, and enjoyable in quality and quantity. That the test of approbation or disapprobation is left to... the consensus of experts in different walks of life.

Mill then refers directly to utility, which is the end of human action, as a rule; he explicates,

the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and percepts of human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation.²

The question which can be raised here concerns the just-

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.262-263.

2. Ibid., p.263.

ifiability of the utilitarian rule: does it emerge from the moral practice, experience and wisdom of those who know, as mentioned in Mill's account, or does the rule justify the practice? And does the rule here mean obligation, i.e. if something, a rule or an act, is justified as the agreeable kind of practice, is it obligatory on all members of society to do it? In other words, is the rule universal? Mill is quite sure about the universality of the rule, since the greatest happiness is directed to all mankind, not only that, but to the whole sentient creation.¹ Having a utilitarian rule as a first principle and self-evident principle, Mill insists that we need all the past experience for the achievement of subordinate ends, (he means daily moral practice like 'keep promises', 'do not lie', 'do not steal' and so on); and principles apart from the ultimate end or sum-mum bonum; as a matter of fact, we cannot dispense with past experience in our endeavour to achieve either subordinate principles or a first principle.² Even in positive religions man is advised to look back into the history of ancient nations and ponder about the different patterns of behaviour those people of the past were experiencing, so that he can follow the good examples and avoid the bad practices; e.g. in the Qurān there are complete chapters about stories of earlier prophets. The case being that different prophets are sent to different nations, according to the particular pattern of behaviour practised by those people at different times. We are reminded in each chapter that the story is for admonition.³ Mill supplies a similar example; he says,

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.263.

2. Ibid., pp.275-276.

3. The Holy Quran, passim.

There is no difficulty in proving any ethical standard whatever to work ill, if we suppose universal idiocy to be conjoined with it; but on any hypothesis short of that, mankind must by this time have acquired positive beliefs to the effects of some actions on their happiness; and the beliefs which have thus come down are the rules of morality for the multitude, and for the philosopher until he has succeeded in finding better.¹

The similarity being, the effect of past experiences on the present experiences, whether at an individual level, or a social level. As far as the principle of utility is directed towards the greatest happiness as a desired good, then utility does justify all actions to promote this end, since it is an ultimate end and a summum bonum. But in so far as other ends and practices are concerned, man is capable of the necessary improvement in his behaviour and capable of learning from experience. Moser argues that,

However, Mill presupposes not only a distinction between right and wrong, but also the basic principles of customary morality, like "One ought not to murder", "One ought not to torture", "One ought to help people in distress", etc. Although he does not say so explicitly, he probably believes that what motivates people to accept such moral principles are the social feelings of mankind which he calls a "powerful natural sentiment". The morality which Mill claims for his argument is not meant to operate in a moral vacuum, but only against this background of social feelings and moral beliefs.²

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.275-276.

2. Moser, Shia, "A Comment on Mill's Argument for Utilitarianism", Inquiry, Vol.6, 1963, p.308.

Moral rules, then, can act as paradigms and ideals or standards, the achievement of which determines the rightness of wrongness of actions. We may not be able to attain the standard of morality set by the rules, yet we can be right or wrong according to our nearness to the ideal standard. The rule as such, then, must justify the practice and, at the same time, allow for utilitarian considerations for different practices. Mill argues to the effect that experience and practice are as necessary as the received rules; he says,

Again, defenders of utility often find themselves called upon to reply to such objections as this - that there is not time, previous to action, for calculating and weighing the effects of any line of conduct on the general happiness. This is exactly as if anyone were to say that it is impossible to guide our conduct by Christianity, because there is not time, on every occasion in which anything has to be done, to read through the Old and New Testaments. The answer to this objection is, that there has been ample time, namely, the whole past duration of the human species. During all that time, mankind have been learning by experience the tendencies of actions; on which experience all the prudence, as well as all the morality of life, are dependent. People talk as if the commencement of this cause of experience had hitherto been put off and as if, at the moment when some man feels tempted to meddle with the property or life of another, he had to begin considering for the first time whether murder and theft are injurious to human happiness.¹

'Paradigm' or 'standard' morality, means 'learnable' or 'recognizable', as has been suggested by Urmson² and

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.275.

2. Urmson, J.O., "The Interpretation of the Moral Philosophy of J.S. Mill", from Theories of Ethics, edited by Philippa Foot, pp.128-136.

Brandt.¹ This sense has been asserted by Mill himself; when talking about the ultimate sanction, he says,

The ultimate sanction, therefore, of all morality (external motives apart) being a subjective feeling in our own minds, I see nothing embarrassing to those whose standard is utility in the question, what is the sanction of that particular standard? We may answer, the same as of all other moral standards - the conscientious feelings of mankind. Undoubtedly this sanction has no binding efficacy on those who do not possess the feelings it appeals to: but neither will these persons be more obedient to any other moral principle than to the utilitarian one.²

Even if morality were to belong to the realm of 'things in themselves', still the practice depends on subjective experience, i.e. a process of learning, or give and take process. This could be formulated in a rule such as proposed by Urmson,

An act is right if and only if it conforms with that learnable set of rules, the adoption of which by everyone would maximize intrinsic value.³

These set of rules will act as subordinate moral codes, the application of which would necessarily lead to the first principle. Brandt makes this fact clear as he

1. Brandt, Richard B., "Toward a Credible Utilitarianism", from Morality and the Language of Conduct, edited by Hector-Neri-Castaneda and George Nakhrikian (London, 1963), pp.123-126.

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, edited by M. Warnock, pp.281-282.

3. Brandt, R.B., "Toward a Credible Utilitarianism", op. cit., p.124.

writes,

This principle does not at all imply that the rightness or wrongness of an act is contingent upon the agent's having thought about all the complex business of the identity of a set of ideal moral rules; it asserts, rather, that an act is right if and only if it conforms to such a set of rules, regardless of what the agent may think.¹

Brandt adds later that,

We do not, of course, ordinarily do anything as complicated as try to think out the complete ideal moral code; we are content with considering whether certain specific injunctions relevant to the problem we are considering might be included in a good and workable code. Nevertheless, we are prepared to admit that the whole ideal code is relevant. For if someone shows us that a specific injunction which we think would be an acceptable part of a moral code clearly would not work out in view of other provisions necessary to an ideal code, we should agree that a telling point had been made and revise our thinking accordingly.²

This I think would be typical of a paradigmatic morality which can accomodate Mill's utility principle as well as his subordinate rules, which work side by side with the main first principle. The word 'conforms' in Brandt's first statement, does not mean 'strictly conform', but there is a degree of laxity and flexibility

1. Brandt, R.B., "Toward a Credible Utilitarianism", op. cit., p.124.

2. Ibid., pp.124-125.

allowable in the practice, as far as it approximates to the standard, or at least fulfils most of the conditions set by the standard or ideal morality, i.e. set of rules.

(c) The problem of pleasure in a pleasure intended happiness.

As an explanation of what he means by pleasure and pain as ends, Mill writes,

To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure: and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded - namely, that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends, and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.¹

Pleasure according to the principle, then, is the desirable thing because it is desired as an end. Mill embarks on this business before he defines 'good', or what he means by good as an end; this is why the query at this juncture centres round 'the desirable' and 'desired' as ends. It has been suggested by Moore that, if the desired and the desirable are the same thing (i.e. from the

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, edn, M. Warnock, p.257.

fact that something is desirable Mill draws the conclusion that people desire it); and if pleasure is the only end desirable as good in itself, then there will be no difference between the different kinds of pleasures, i.e. if pleasure is the criterion for what is good, then there should not be any difference between two different pleasures, the same can be said about colour, if it were the criterion of what is good there wouldn't be any difference between different colours, e.g. black and red shall be the same, or white and blue for that matter won't be any different at all.¹ The problem with Moore's interpretation is that he does not consider 'good' as a natural object or a feeling for that matter; on the contrary, he considers it as an indefinable, unanalysable predicate. This is why he accuses Mill of what he calls the 'Naturalistic Fallacy', i.e. predicating 'good' of natural objects. Again Moore in supposing the good as 'unnatural', 'indefinable', 'unanalysable', is not really proving that there is a quality or property which is good and which is indefinable; what he seems to imply is that such quality or property has no existence whatsoever and we shouldn't tamper with the term 'good' anymore. We can only think of God as indefinable, unanalysable as such, or 'the good' in a Platonic sense, i.e. the idea of 'good' or 'real good'. But if we attribute the quality good to natural objects as well as to animate objects or sentient beings, and also to supernatural or metaphysical being, e.g. God, then we've got to redefine the word according to the different uses. Certainly, we can apply the use to the above mentioned categories, we have to distinguish, then, between different contexts of the use, e.g. 'this is a good description', and 'that is good food', I can say about the

1. Hall, Everett W., "The 'Proof' of Utility in Bentham and Mill", Ethics, LX (1949), 1-18, (p.2).

description of the food that 'it is good' and that 'I enjoyed the description' and that I would like to promote such enjoyment or 'pleasure' in the future. Would any wise man think of this kind of enjoyment or 'pleasure', i.e. of the description as an enjoyment of food or a pleasure of food? If 'description' is not something to do with stomach and appetite, then to where does it belong? If the pleasure of the description is a pleasure of writing or reading, certainly it will not be of the same type as the pleasure of eating or drinking, i.e. pleasure of food; then may I deduce that the 'good' which pertains to 'description' is different from the 'good' which pertains to food. If I can say this, then I can simply say that they are two different kinds of pleasures, if not logically, then physiologically and psychologically they are different, i.e. pleasures of the senses or sensual pleasures and mental pleasures. So the quality is different.

But if Moore insists that the 'good' is indefinable because it is 'the good' or 'a real good' which is unnatural, then, of course, pleasure or colour or any other predicate for that matter, which is identifiable with 'good' will fall in the same category as Moore rightly suggests. In this respect then, the 'Naturalistic Fallacy' itself will be a naturalistic fallacy, i.e. denying the predication of good to natural objects. Mill, however, distinguishes between different pleasures and assigns them different places in life; he says,

To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure - no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit - they designate as utterly mean and grovelling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the

followers of Epicurus, were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened, and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by the German, French, and English assailants.¹

Mill, in elucidation of the concept of pleasure adds that,

It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valued than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.²

As to how we can differentiate between different pleasures quantitatively, Mill's answer is that,

Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference irrespective of any feeling or moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure.³

It seems here Mill is opting for a kind of moral induction based on observation learned by experience of different people who practised different sorts of pleasures, to decide which is quantitatively greater than the

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.257-258.

2. Ibid., pp.258-259.

3. Ibid., p.259.

other. It seems that the consensus of experts can decide whether the quality of this pleasure is greater than that pleasure, but could they also make this pleasure or that a criterion of right and wrong? And how could the pleasures of different individuals lead to the greatest happiness for all?

Sidgwick suggests that the gap between the pleasure of an aggregate of individuals and the general happiness as desirable by all can be bridged by an appeal to Rational Benevolence as a basis for the utilitarian system.¹ This it would seem, is not incompatible with Mill's appeal to the consensus of experts who can decide which is the greatest pleasure and consequently, if it is the only good conducive to the greatest happiness, it should be a universal rule. This is why Mill insists on the nobleness of character, cultivation of character as a background for a utilitarian system, i.e. to emphasize the role of those who know in the implementation of the system. Mill endeavours to make this point clear; he says,

Now it is unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying both, (he means higher and lower pleasures)... do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties.
Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a pro-

1. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, Bk.III, Chap.XIII, pp.387-388.

mise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs.¹

This is what Sidgwick calls the Rational Benevolence, which is identifiable with Universalistic Hedonism, Sidgwick argues that,

Intuitionist method vigorously applied yields as its final result the doctrine of pure Universalistic Hedonism - which it is convenient to denote by the single word, Utilitarianism.²

It appears that Sidgwick's analysis is right about the utility principle, as far as the greatest happiness which is an ultimate end, universal rule and a first, a priori, principle is concerned, but the subordinate rules, e.g. 'keep your promise', 'do not tell lies', 'keep your word', etc., are subject to what Mill himself calls human experience, which depends on past observation, i.e. some empirical background apart from the intuitive first principle. It seems that Mill's utilitarianism can be said to be partly intuitive and partly empirical. Mill relies on such experience as practised by children, as Dorothy Mitchell argues that,

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.259.

2. Sidgwick, H., Methods of Ethics, p.407.

In order to achieve the greatest good of the greatest number, children are to be brought up so that they cannot conceive of themselves being happy if someone else is miserable and so, anyone who is well brought up will be able to answer his own question "What reason have I to do the right thing?" by reminding himself that he wants other people to be happy. ¹

Mill depends on education, cultivation of noble feelings and observation as much as he depends on the first principle and the Rational Benevolence in defending the system. His utilitarian system incorporates various kinds of knowledge including religious knowledge. Thus he defends utilitarianism against assailants who argue that the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned, he answers that,

As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as you would be done by, and to love your neighbour as yourself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.²

This is actually similar to the religious spirit which permeates the religious utilitarianism of Paley. Mill launches also a move towards educational approach to utility as he says,

1. Mitchell, Dorothy, "Mill's Theory of Value", Theoria, 35 (1970), 109-115 (p.114).

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.268.

As a means of making the nearest approach to this ideal, utility would enjoin, first, that laws and social arrangements should place the happiness, or (as speaking practically it may be called) the interest, of every individual, as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole; and secondly, that education and opinion, which have so used that power as to establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole.¹

It seems that this sense of social mobilization of human feelings is more or less typical of any utilitarian system and indeed, as Sidgwick rightly says, it adds up to Rational Benevolence which underlies universalistic hedonism, the backbone of the utilitarian system.

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.268-269.

SECTION II

THE UTILITARIAN TENDENCIES IN THE ETHICS OF MISKAWAYH
COMPARED WITH ASPECTS OF UTILITARIANISM IN
THE PHILOSOPHIES OF HUME, PALEY AND MILL

CHAPTER IV

MISKAWAYH AND HUME

Reason as an Essence of Human Nature

Why should a treatise on moral philosophy start off with a definition of the soul and a description of the faculties of the soul? Miskawayh posed his writing on the soul, as an answer to the question,

Can man's being and his existence be explained without postulating the existence of the soul?¹

or:

Can sensibility, perception, imagination and intellection stand by themselves, each sufficient for itself, or must they all inhere in some substance which exists in its own right?²

Miskawayh was obviously not satisfied with corporeal

1. ^c Abd al-Hamīd, Ibn Miskawayh: A Study of His al-Fawz al-Asghar, p.98.

2. Ibid.

existence so as to attribute the activities of the soul to bodily or material existence; he finally and emphatically opted for the existence of the soul. Such activities for him necessitate an existence of a different substance. The human nature of man pertains to the soul, for the body is common to man and animal.¹

Miskawayh then divides the soul into three faculties each with a different function.

The importance attached by Miskawayh to the divisions of the soul is based on the functions of the three faculties of the soul. The functions ascribed by Miskawayh to the three different faculties of the soul, i.e. the rational, the irascible and the concupiscent, are responsible for the emergence of the different moral virtues. Thus the rational soul is responsible for true knowledge, by which it achieves the virtue of knowledge and wisdom. The concupiscent soul, when moderate, yields to the rational soul and achieves the virtue of temperance and liberality. The irascible soul is responsible for the virtues of magnanimity and courage.²

What Is The Relation Of The Faculties Of The Soul To Reason?

Miskawayh allots each of the faculties of the soul a function, i.e. a virtue. It is to the different faculties that different virtues accord. The hierarchy of

1. Op. cit., Passim.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), pp.14-15.

different faculties corresponds to the hierarchy of different virtues. The best virtues are the ones which comply with the dictates of reason. Likewise the higher faculties are the ones which constitute the rational nature of man. Indeed, Miskawayh is very much interested in the rational harmony between the faculties which results in a rational outcome of rational virtues; he explains this as follows:-

Then, when all these virtues are moderate and have the proper relation one to another, a virtue is produced, which represents their perfection and completeness, namely, the virtue of justice.¹

Miskawayh, as it appears, is keen to see that there is a proper relation between virtues and that they are all perfect, perfection being represented by the virtue of justice, for justice keeps the proportion between virtues as it has been suggested by Miskawayh in the chapter on justice, where he defines justice as,

The etymology of the word musāwāh /equality/ indicates to you its meaning. For counter-balance /^cidl/ in loads, equilibrium /ⁱtidāl/ in weights and justice /^cadl/ in actions are all derived from the meaning of equality/ mus-awāh /. Equality is the noblest of the proportions in the art of music* and other arts.²

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.15-17.

2. Ibid., p.101.

*Music is one of the four sciences from which arithmetic originates. The first being number, the second is geometry, the third figure and the fourth is the science of combination, which searches into the different conditions of tunes and it... (Cont'd)

In his treatise on Justice, Miskawayh defines voluntary justice as,

As for voluntary justice which is found particularly in man and for which he is praised, it is the cultivation of peaceful co-operation among the different faculties of the soul, so that they may not dominate one over the other and rebel one against the other.¹

The co-operation of the faculties of the soul results in the health of the soul, the nobility of it and the excellence of soul over body.

All the noblest proportions of the faculties of soul and the co-operation between different powers of the soul are directed towards an end, as we have been told by Miskawayh in his Al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, in which he describes justice in treatment as,

Injustice particularly contrasts with justice in treatment, Justice /^cadl/ is derived from /ⁱctidāl/ which means equal division (al-taqsīt bi-al-sawiyyah). This sawiyyah is derived from musāwāh /equality/ between many things, equality brings about multiplicity and gives it existence and maintains its discipline. It is by Justice and Equality that love spreads among people, their intentions are reconciled, their cities prosper, their treatment is completed and their ways straightened.²

(Cont'd)... is called music. Terms used in A Dictionary of the Technical Terms Used in the Sciences of the Muslims, Part I, edited by Mawlawie Muhammad Wajih Abd al-Haqq & Gholam Kadir, p.41.

1. Miskawayh, I.J., p.30131.

2. Miskawayh, Al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, problem 29, p.84.

This is a broad definition of justice; it involves equal division as well as equality among many things, i.e. a kind of mathematical proportion. But this definition is employed towards an end, i.e. a social level, which is social justice, which leads to love, prosperity and complete treatment. This is apparently a utilitarian end.

Utilitarian here means that it is a kind of Rational Benevolence.¹ It is by knowing justice, the mother of virtues that we come to know the social end towards which justice should be directed. This utilitarian sense of justice has been introduced by Miskawayh in T.A. as follows;

Furthermore, a person is said to possess one of These and is praised for it only when it goes beyond him to others. If he confines it to himself alone, it cannot be attributed to him and its name will then be changed. Thus, generosity when it does not extend beyond its possessor, is called hypocrisy (and self-gratification) (nifāq),² and /similarly/ courage is termed arrogance and zeal, while knowledge becomes /merely/ a kind of enlightenment.³ *

1. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, p.387, in which Sidgwick refers to some utilitarian moral terms such as "The axiom of prudence, as I have given, implied in Rational Egoism as commonly accepted. Again the axiom of justice or equality as above stated - 'that similar cases ought to be treated similarly' belongs in all its applications to utilitarianism as much as to any system commonly called intuitional: While the axiom of Rational Benevolence is, in my view, required as a rational basis of the utilitarian system".

2. Zurayk translated (nifāq) as prodigality, but the nearest word to (nifāq) in English is hypocrisy. Zurayk is referring to Aristotle's use of the word: Aristotle uses the word as follows, "With regard to giving and taking of money the mean is liberality, the excess and the defect prodigality and meanness". It seems that Zurayk is putting Aristotle's prodigality in the mouth of Miskawayh. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.II, Ch.6, 1107⁶⁻⁸⁻¹⁰.

3. Miskawayh, T.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.16. * Zurayk's translation of (Mustabsir) (Cont'd) ..

It seems here that Miskawayh is suggesting that the utilitarian end is a moral end, because it is altruistic, i.e. it extends beyond the individual to others, whereas a non-utilitarian end is a mere knowledge, i.e. a kind of enlightenment.

Miskawayh, here, is also ascribing usefulness to moral virtues,

a person is said to possess one of these virtues and is praised for it only when it goes beyond him to others.¹

Coincidentally, this is typical to Hume's sense of usefulness; Hume says,

It seems so natural a thought to ascribe to their utility the praise, which we bestow on the social virtues, that one would expect to meet this principle everywhere in moral writers, as the chief foundation of their reasoning and enquiry.²

If moral virtues are not useful, i.e. do not extend to others, then they are liable to disapprobation. Thus Miskawayh expresses this sense of disapprobation as,

(Cont'd)... is seeking discernment, but in the view of the writer, the nearest word to enlighten in English is enlighten^{ed} and hence the noun enlightenment.

1. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.16.

2. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.46.

If he confines it to himself alone, it cannot be attributed to him and its name will then be changed. Thus, generosity, when it does not extend beyond its possessor, is called hypocrisy, and [similarly] courage is termed arrogance and zeal, while knowledge becomes [merely] enlightenment.¹

This is exactly what Hume calls disgust and disapprobation excited by (unuseful) qualities. He borrows an example from architecture,

A building, whose doors and windows are exact squares, would hurt the eye by that very proportion, as ill-adapted to the figure of a human creature, for whose service the fabric was intended.²

Hume then transfers the scene from architecture to a human situation, i.e. a moral quality; he says,

What wonder then, that a man, whose habits and conduct are hurtful to society, and dangerous or pernicious to every one who has an intercourse with him, should, on that account, be an object of disapprobation, and communicate to every spectator the strongest sentiment of disgust and hatred.³

Obviously, hypocrisy and self-gratification excites disgust and so is the case with arrogance and all similar

1. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.16.

2. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.46.

3. Ibid., p.47.

qualities, i.e. unuseful qualities, though Miskawayh does not use the word, yet these qualities convey the same sense as Hume's sense of disgust and hatred.

Hume would actually refer the origin of these qualities, i.e. moral qualities, to human sentiments and sympathy based on self-love, due to his inclination towards moral-sense theory, i.e. instinctive moral behaviour. Thus he states that,

Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is utterly unimpotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reason.¹

As a matter of fact, sentiments and sympathy are the components of these passions excited by morals. The link, therefore, between human sentiments, which initiate moral valuation and self-love on the one hand, and the link between self-love and moral-sense theory, on the other hand, would label Hume as an egoistic hedonist rather than an altruistic hedonist.²

Miskawayh, however, would resort to reason or the rational aspect of human nature envisaged in the concept of justice, which is borrowed by Miskawayh from Plato's Republic³ and Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics.⁴ Miska-

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, p.456.

2. C.f. the writer's analysis of Hume's viewpoint in Chapter I, Passim.

3. Plato, The Republic IV 440^c, speaks about the harmony between the powers of the soul, which produce justice.

4. Aristotle, N.E., 8.1135^{b15} -1136^{a2}, where Aristotle talks about justice as an act of deliberation and injustice as an act violating proportion.

wayh also refers to the nature of moral qualities and whether they are gained by natural disposition or acquired by experience and reason. In T.A. he agrees with the view that the character, or what he calls (a state of the soul which causes it to perform its actions without thought or deliberation),¹ is partly natural and partly acquired by experience. He, however, decides later that actions are done out of a customary trend, gained from long experience and practice, but we can define it as a customary behaviour, from which actions ensue without thought or deliberation.

This definition has been mentioned in al-Hawāmil-wa al-Shawāmil almost word for word.² It is actually not very far from Hume's position, where Hume considers reason impotent in the formation of moral traditions.³ For Hume the role of reason in moral philosophy is limited; it can only function in two ways,

Either when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it; or when it discovers the connection of causes and effects, so as to afford us means of exciting any passion.⁴

Miskawayh, on the other hand, considers reason as an essence of human nature. It is by reason that man is different from animal. Yet in the final analysis, char-

1. Miskawayh, T.A., p.29.

2. Miskawayh, H.wa Sh., p.86 (Arabic Text).

3. Hume, D. A Treatise on Human Nature, p.457.

4. Ibid., p.459.

acter can be natural and acquired at the same time.

Miskawayh thus expresses his views about reason as an essence of human nature and, at the same time, he states its importance in practical philosophy,

It is for this reason that the ancients held different views regarding character. Some said that character belongs to the non-rational soul; others that the rational soul may have a share of it.

Then people have differed on another point. Some have expressed the view that he who has a natural character does not lose it. Others have said: No part of character is natural to man, nor is it non-natural. For we are disposed to it, it also changes as a result of discipline and admonition either/ rapidly or slowly.

This last view is one we favour because we observe its truth plainly and because the former view leads to the nullification of the faculty of discernment and reason, to the rejection of all forms of guidance, to the surrender of people to savagery and neglect, and to the abandonment of youth and boys to the state in which they happen to be without any direction or instruction. This is manifestly very disgraceful.¹

It seems that the views reviewed by Miskawayh represent different groups of philosophers. They are, according to their philosophies, as follows:-

- (1) The Epicureans --- Character belongs to the non-natural soul.²

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.29-30.

2. Sidgwick, H., Outlines of the History of Ethics, p.85.

(2) The Stoics ---

He who has a natural character does not lose it. ¹

(3) Galen ---

No part of character is natural to man, nor is it non-natural. For we are disposed to it, it also changes as a result of discipline and admonition either/rapidly or slowly.²

It is evident that Miskawayh chooses Galen's viewpoint.

The contrast, as far as reason is concerned, is between Miskawayh and Hume: Miskawayh is adopting a Greek position and he is sticking to it. This Greek viewpoint can be true of Galen, as well as it is true of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

Hume's view on morality represents a revolt against reason and a trend towards scientific observation of moral feeling or moral qualities, i.e. the science of psychology. This attitude of Hume's has been presented by T. Nagel as,

On Hume's viewpoint one begins with psychology, and ethics is an elaboration of it. The basic psychological factors are not themselves brought to light by ethical investig-

1. Sidgwick, H., Outlines of the History of Ethics, p.77.

2. Galen, Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-Akhlāq Li-Gālīnūs, pp.25-34.

ation (the the need for a foundation for ethics may have led to the search for them). And given Hume's famous restrictions on rational assessment of the passions and of preferences, the possibility of justifying morality is strictly limited. Any justification ends finally with the rational gratuitous presence of the emotion of sympathy; if that condition were not met, one would simply have no reason to be moral.¹

This being Hume's position, the Greek school represents the anti-psychological approach to morality; T. Nagel elucidates the position of Plato and Aristotle as follows:

Plato and Aristotle, each in his own way, constitute examples of such a rebellion against the priority of psychology. Both felt, I think, that the motivation for being moral does not come from elsewhere, i.e. from any independently comprehensible desire or feeling. The ethical motivation, even at its most basic level, can on this view be understood only through ethics.²

Thus we can observe that the Hume revolt against reason contrasts with Miskawayh's revolt for reason, i.e. the Greek rational approach. Hume's psychology, depending on self-interest, takes the form of egoistic hedonism. For him, useful qualities must please and must be fit for a benevolent purpose. It is therefore the utility of the action which is to be praised or blamed.³

1. Nagel, T., The Possibility of Altruism, pp.10-11.

2. Ibid., p.11.

3. Hume, D., An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, p.52.

Again, it is the social outcome of the action which each individual appreciates differently. The love for others is pivoted on self-love and self-interest. To Hume, they are instinctive.

Although Hume denies reason in morality, especially practical reason, yet he seems to have initiated the utilitarian reasoning as a way of justifying scientific moral thinking, i.e. moral psychology.¹ Miskawayh, however, opts for Rational Benevolence and hard-headed reason to prove the necessity of altruism in his rational utilitarian attitude to morality, i.e. the right of others to be counted as human beings, members of the city by dint of their social nature.

This is a typical Aristotelian intellectualism, where Miskawayh borrows Aristotle's dictum that

... Man is born for citizenship.²

Al-Insān madanī bi-al-ṭab^c.³

This social nature of man presents one aspect of his rationality. Thus Miskawayh elucidates,

1. C.f. writer's criticisms of Hume's position about reason, Chapter I, Passim.

2. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.I, Ch.7, 1097^{b12}.

3. Miskawayh, I.A., p.25.

We have made it clear in the preceding pages, that man, of all the animals, cannot attain his perfection by himself alone. He must have recourse to the help of a great number of people in order to achieve a good life and follow the right path. This is why the philosophers have said: *Man is a civic being by nature. This means that he needs to live in a city with a large population in order to achieve human happiness. Every man needs other people by nature as well as by necessity. He must, therefore, be friendly towards others, associate well with them, and hold them in sincere affection, for they complement him and complete his humanity; and he himself plays the same role in their lives.¹

This is the kind of practical reason which is workable in morality and which has been reduced by Hume to mere human sympathy.² This, here, is the point where Miskawayh and Hume part company. It is a difference of epistemology, (theory of knowledge). In part of Hume's viewpoint, there is a confusion between knowing and perceiving,³ for Hume does not approve of moral qualities or values as matters of fact. If moral values have nothing

* This is what Aristotle says about life in a city: "for the final good is thought to be self-sufficient. Now by self-sufficient we do not mean that which is sufficient for a man by himself, for one man who lives a solitary life, but also for parents, children, wife, and in general for his friends and fellow citizens, since man is born for citizenship". Aristotle, N.E., Bk.I, Ch.7, 1097^{b8-12}.

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.25.

2. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Of Morals, pp.468-469.

3. C.f. the controversial book on Moral Notions by Julius Kavesi, pp.19-20, in which he criticizes Hume's position and tries to prove that there are some real values in the real world and until this world changes we have no option but to use the evaluative vocabulary for reference to the existing present real world.

to do with matters of fact, then they are not perceivable ideas but they can be perceivable impressions.¹ This status would resign them a place with sounds and colours, i.e. perceptions of the mind.² Reason here is impotent. Because,

reason or science is nothing but the comparing of ideas, and the discovery of their relations.³

Hume, however, fails to see that reason is part of practical knowledge, e.g. murder as a human action involves a rational process which is part and parcel of observable and deductive knowledge; for Hume it is not a matter of fact and, therefore, it is human sympathy which makes me feel that murder is disgusting, and thence it is not knowledge per se. Miskawayh, on the other hand, following the Greek's track, would consider murder as a vice, i.e. a moral quality which involves practical reason and, therefore, is a practical knowledge; i.e. by going back to the Socratic dictum that 'Virtue is knowledge', we can understand that, here, knowledge means a rational process involving practical reasoning, not mere intellectual fantasy. Hume ends up with a kind of moral psychology, whereas Miskawayh sticks to his philosophic ethics, the Aristotelian rationalism tinged with intellectual Platonism and Neo-Platonism, represented by Galen.

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Of Morals, p.456.

2. Ibid., p.469.

3. Ibid., p.466.

The real difference though between Hume's position and Miskawayh's position, on the other hand, is that the resultant moral quality of Hume's utilitarianism does not pay heed to what is intrinsic of the moral qualities; in fact, there are no such things as real moral values. What we call moral values does not add up to 'intrinsic qualities' or 'real values'. They only express the public usefulness of human feeling and sympathy. They are a mode of reasoning about this human phenomenon, which does not accept reason as part of the psychological process. Miskawayh, at the other end of the scale, is using a Greek way of reasoning about moral qualities to prove the deep-rooted values in man's social life, which are part and parcel of human nature. Miskawayh does not negate the role of reason because he considers reason as one of the components of the rational process about intrinsic real human values.

The difference between the two philosophers can be illustrated by a simple example; if we say 'X is a good man', this sentence means to Hume that a particular action or behaviour done by X at a particular time and in a particular situation meets our approbation, but if the action or the situation could have happened or ensued from X as an inanimate object, still we could have approved of it.¹ For Miskawayh, however, 'X is a good man', means X has a character which is good, i.e. X has a khuluq which we know about him and which is customary, and which is also a state of the soul which causes it to perform its actions without thought or deliberation.²*

1. Hume, D., A Treatise of Human Nature, Bk.III, Pt.I, sect.I, pp.468-469, where Hume is making the point that morality is not an object of reason and that it has nothing to do with matters of fact.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., p.29. * Apparently this definition of khuluq has been ... (Cont'd)

This khuluq or character can best be depicted as that which distinguishes man from animal. Miskawayh's introductory chapter on the powers of the soul and the virtues which are connected with each, is not written in vain. It actually helps explaining the noble quality of the substance of the soul and hence ascribes human qualities to the soul. Rationality then pertains to the human substance of man. Miskawayh expresses this rational quality of man as follows,

That this art - I mean the art of character training, which is concerned with the betterment of the actions of man qua man is the most excellent of all the arts becomes evident from what I say:-

As we have shown already, the human substance has a distinctive activity which it does not share with any other of the world's existents. Man is the noblest of these existents, but, when he does not perform the actions distinctive of his substance, he resembles, as we have said, the horse which, if it ceases to perform completely the actions distinctive

(Cont'd)... borrowed by Miskawayh from Galen. Galen's statement of the definition is as follows:-

الخلق حال للنفس دائمة الانا الى آت يفعل
أفعال النفس بلا روية ولا اختيار .

(Badawi, Abd al-Rahman, Studies and Texts in the Philosophy and Science of the Arabs, p.190, C.f. Kraus, B., Kitāb al-Akhlāq Li-Gālīnūs (Galen's Book on Morality), p.25), which can be rendered into the following English translation: "Character is a mood of the soul which moves man to perform actions of the soul without discernment or choice".

Miskawayh's version is,

الخلق حال للنفس دائمة لئلا الى أفعالهم من غير فكر
ولا روية .

and the English translation is, "Character is a state of the soul which moves it to perform its actions without thought or deliberation".

This is also typical of the definition given by Yahyā Ibn ^cAdī, which goes as follows, #

إن الخلق هم حال للنفس بك يفعل الانا أفعاله
بلا روية ولا اختيار .

which can be rendered into the following translation, "Character is a mood of the soul which moves man to perform his actions without discernment or choice".

The two versions of the Muslim philosopher, Miskawayh, and the Christian philosopher, Yahyā Ibn ^cAdī prove that they have borrowed the definition from Galen whose book on Moral Philosophy was very well known to Muslim and Christian scholars of the time.

Kitāb Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq, written by Yahyā Ibn ^cAdī, edited by Takrītī, p.72.

of a horse, is used/ as a donkey for carrying loads or as cattle for slaughter and is better dead than alive.¹

There is, then, a certain degree of expectancy which is important for the attainment of humanity. It is this expectancy which gives rationality a human flavour, and also human experience turns expectancy into a rational process. In fact, Miskawayh first raised the issue of the soul in answer to the question,

Can sensibility, perception, imagination and intellection stand by themselves, each sufficient for itself, or must they all inhere in some substance which exists in its own right?²

Indeed the answer to this question gives priority to the rational soul as the monitor of the-body-soul mechanism and a generator of higher virtues and hence a guardian of moral values. Miskawayh makes this clear,

At the beginning of this work, we said that it is necessary for us to know our souls: What they are, and for what purpose they exist. We said further that, for every existing substance, there is a perfection which is distinctive of it and a certain activity which, in so far as it is that individual thing, it does not share with anything else.³

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.33.

2. ^cAbd al-Hamīd, Ibn Miskawayh: A Study of His al-Fawz al-Aṣghar, p.98.

3. Ibid., p.35.

Rationality, then, is unique in human experience. If Hume builds his utilitarian moral reasoning without depending on reason, on the contrary it is mainly based on self-love and self-interest which teaches man to be benevolent because he would like to be treated on the same terms and on the same basis, Miskawayh also builds his rational approach on altruistic premises. He, however, draws some controversial conclusions from those premises, e.g. from the initial definition of khuluq as a constant mood of the soul (sajiyya), he draws the conclusion that there are such unchangeable characteristics which pertain to different nations like the Arabs, Romans, Persians and Indians, which distinguish them one from another. The cause for this difference between different nations, we are told by Miskawayh, has something to do with the geographical as well as the cosmological background of different lands and countries.¹

To be more precise, Miskawayh provides this answer to the question of whether we can attribute different characteristics to different nations,

When a mood of a noble part of the soul is moderate, I mean in the noble parts of the body which are: heart, liver and brain, if to this is added the good virtues we mentioned - I mean the order of the best actions, and according to the mood, and the refinement of the mood and maintaining it, there the action recurs, and devotion to habit - there we reap the resultant virtue. Whether this takes place in a nation, or a person, or whether

1. The main source on which Miskawayh depends as far as this part of his work is concerned, is Galen, the physician-philosopher. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.IX, Ch.2, 1165^{a30-35} and Bk.X, Ch.9, 1180^{a6}.

that was the beginning of noble qualities, or a gradual training, when the mood is pleasant, and the aptitude is in a state of readiness and the custom is continuous, then virtue will be the constant outcome.¹

The geographical and cosmological background of a person or a nation affects the structure of the different powers of the soul and hence results in different states or moods of the soul typical of that person or that nation. Miskawayh, however, gives a practical example in an answer to problem 87 in al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil about the miseries of the ignorant ones and the happiness of the knowledgeable ones; this can be found in the blacks (Al-Sūdān) and the reds (Al-Humrān). The blacks are pleasant and ignorant, while the reds are wise, more rational and considerate. Miskawayh's answer is that,

The blacks, especially the negroes are pleasant and active, this is caused by the moderation of their hearts' blood, not because their characters are as dark as the darkness of their colours. The blackness of their colours is caused by their nearness to the sun. When the sun passes in its lowest orbit over their heads, it burns their skins and their hair. It appears - I mean their hair, crispy (woolly), which is really an oxidization of the hair, because the heat covers their exteriors and extracts instinctive heat from their interiors. For heat moves towards heat. This is why there is not much instinctive heat in their hearts. If the instinctive heat in the heart is not strong, the blood will not be caused to burn, instead it will be rather refined and thin. The blood of the negroes is always thin and refined, this is why they are also less courageous...

1. Miskawayh, H wa Sh., Problem 87, pp.209-210.

As to the reds (by the reds he means the whites) most of them are in the Northern hemisphere and the cold countries which are far from the sun, the instinctive heat increases in their hearts, and because the cold covers their exteriors, their skins become white, and their hair curly (fluffy). Their heat goes back to the interiors of their bodies, escaping the cold weather, for the sun is far from them, this is why they are courageous and the heat of their hearts is more stonger. Their blood for this reason, is darker and black and not moderate.

The moderate people, who are away from the North and South, and they inhabit the midlands, are more complete as compared with these directions, and they have good moods, and nearer to moderation.¹

Miskawayh here commits himself to many sciences without perfecting any or satisfying the conditions of scientific study. He describes a phenomenon, geographically and biologically and then draws ethical conclusions about the characteristics of these different groups of people and nations without providing a strong support for his argument. The initial step in the argument comes from Galen's definition of khuluq, i.e. natural and acquired khuluq. The afore-mentioned description does not commit Miskawayh to a particular scientific theory or a racial attitude towards a particular group of people. In T.A., however, Miskawayh seems to be nearer to a particular commitment rather than just stating a philosophic assumption based on a particular scientific hypothesis. He states that,

The first rank in the human realm, which touches the limit of the animal realm, is the

1. Miskawayh, H. wa Sh., Problem 87, pp.211-212.

rank of the people who dwell in the farthest parts of the inhabited world both to the north and to the south, such as the remotest Turks in the countries of Gog and Magog and the remotest Negroes and similar nations which are distinguished from apes to a slight degree only. Then the faculty of discernment and understanding grows in men until they reach the central regions where intelligence, quickness of understanding and the ability to acquire virtues are produced in them.¹

This is not only a biased viewpoint about the (Akhlāq), characteristics of both Turks and Negroes, but it has a certain racial overtone that distorts the philosophical framework of Miskawayh's utilitarian altruistic attitude which is based on Rational Benevolence and, indeed, Rational Nature of man. The same biased views about human nature and the moral qualities attributed to it, can be traced in Hume's egoistic hedonism. The fact that Hume based his utilitarian attitude on self-love and self-interest, signifies that his scientific ambition is based on subjective observations about the self,² rather than a broad survey of this human phenomenon, but Hume by doing this, is not committed to an ethical theory; as a matter of fact, he is not committed to a moral theory at all. The moral sense theory, which he advocates, is a loose commitment to human sympathy and sentiment. The others are included by way of egoistic benevolence, stemming from selfish feelings. Some philosophers do not consider Hume as a utilitarian.³ Hume is certainly consistent in building his egoistic moral psychology on the basis of moral sense theory and

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.61.

2. Stephen, L., History of English Thought in the 18th Century, p.87.

3. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, p.208. It says this about Hume's ... (Cont'd)

its corollaries. Miskawayh, on the other hand, does not depend on Islamic Law or Muslim Shari^ca in his conclusions about characteristics of actions or Turks and Negroes for that matter. His ideas in this respect should be judged on the merit of the soundness of their logic, i.e. basic ethical and scientific assumptions. They evidently do not stand scientific criticism since they lack experimentation as far as science is concerned and they are not logically sound because their premises are not proven.

The utilitarian trend in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh can be designated as Rule-Utilitarian, because he does not refer to particular actions as much as he refers to collective actions and universal patterns of behaviour, which are customary, and are done without thought or discernment. This pattern of behaviour implies a degree of expectancy in moral attitudes which can be analysed in the light of modern R.U. or A.U.¹ * Yet it can be said to be utilitarian according to the common features it shares with utilitarianism, classical and modern. For instance, it has rational benevolence altruistic hedonism and universalistic hedonism, involving all members of the city. These utilitarian principles have been summed up in the following passage from T.A.,

(Cont'd)... utilitarianism,

"David Hume is often classified as a utilitarian, but he used utility not as normative or even as a utilitarian, but as a normative or even as a descriptive principle, but as an explanatory one: When asked why we approve of certain traits of character, he would point out that they are traits which either are useful or are immediately agreeable.

1. Frankena, William K., Ethics, pp.35-43.

* R.U. = Rule Utilitarian, one must act as if his action will be a universal rule.

A.U. = Act-Utilitarian = one must act so that the end of his action will bring greatest happiness.

We have made it clear in the preceding pages that man, of all the animals, cannot attain his perfection by himself alone. He must have recourse to the help of a great number of people in order to achieve a good life and follow the right path.

This is why the philosophers have said: "Man is a civic being by nature". This means that he needs to live in a city with a large population in order to achieve human happiness. Everyman needs other people by nature as well as by necessity.

He must, therefore, be friendly towards others, associate well with them, and hold them in sincere affection, for they complement him and complete his humanity; and he himself plays the same role in their lives.¹

These, as has been shown, are typical utilitarian tendencies.

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.25.

CHAPTER V

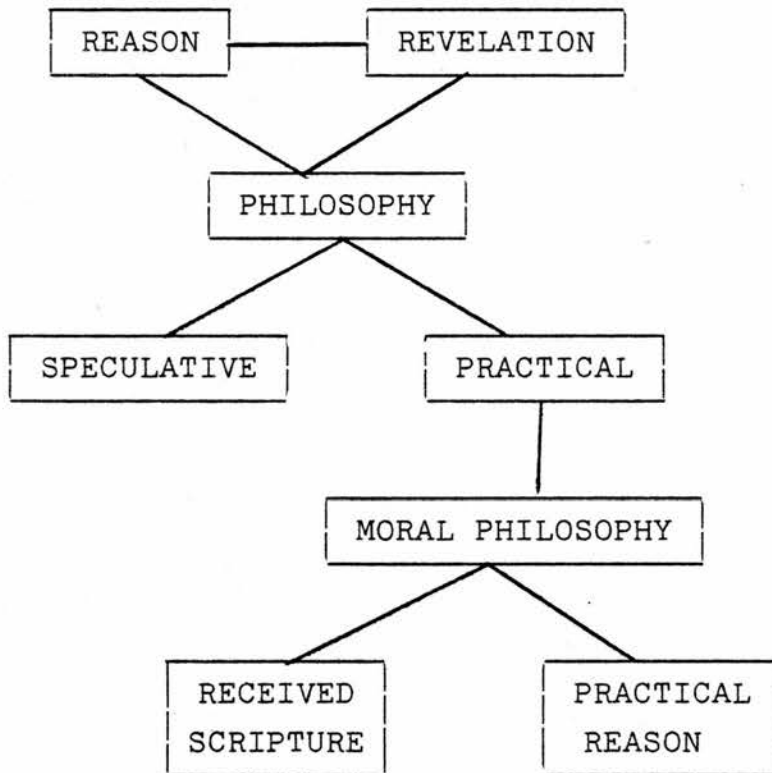
RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF MISKAWAYH'S UTILITARIAN TREND: MISKAWAYH AND PALEY

A broad background can be drawn for the comparison between Paley and Miskawayh. It involves mainly their religious viewpoints. The one is a Muslim and the other is a Christian. They are both said to have stumbled on philosophy by way of curiosity. Both, therefore, are not original philosophers so to speak. Miskawayh comes across Greek philosophy translated into Arabic at his time, himself being a litterateur. He indulges in aspects of moral philosophy dealing with the teachability of virtue by keeping to the feet of Aristotle and Plato. Paley, on the other hand, is a theologian whose interest in Mathematics leads him to speculate into logic and later political and moral philosophy. Their philosophies can be characterized as normative, religious and didactical.

Miskawayh, an admirer of Aristotle, succumbs to the dictates of Aristotelian rationalism. After having spent some time in the life of joy and pleasure, he decides with rigorous determination to carry on a new life of virtue to the end of his life. He comes, thereafter, to reconcile reason and religion or revelation. According to his didactical programme, religion or received instructions comes first, i.e. at an early age and, thence, we start rationalizing or philosophizing about our behaviour, in such a way so as not to contradict the letters of the scripture. Paley more or less builds his moral reasoning on the same edifice of received revelation. In this case, it is Christianity. He opts for a

utilitarian reasoning, depending on mutual benevolence of the faithful for the sake of everlasting happiness.

So far, both Miskawayh and Paley agree on the general scheme of philosophy; in other words, they both follow the same method in researching morals, which can be illustrated as follows



They may differ as to the last step of the method. Miskawayh would rather give the priority to scripture as far as the early years of life are concerned,¹ whereas Paley sticks to the revealed scripture as a guidance all through his research.²

1. ^cIzzat, ^cAbd-Al-^cAzīz, Miskawayh, p.213. C.f. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.50, 55, 154.

2. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.1-3.

Miskawayh demonstrates the workability of the method when he says,

It is the /Law/ Islamic Law, (al-Sharī^ca) which reforms the young, accustoms them to good deeds, and prepares their souls to receive wisdom, seek virtue, and attain human happiness through sound and correct reasoning. It is the duty of the parents to train them to observe these and other forms of good conduct, by different methods of discipline, such as flogging if necessary, or rebukes if availing, or promises of favours or enjoyments which they like, or warnings of punishments which they fear. Then, after they have become accustomed to this conduct, and have followed it for a long period of time, they will be able to learn the proofs of what they had adopted by tradition and will perceive the ways of virtues, their acquisition, and the attainment of their ends by the art which we are treating now.¹

This is not a systematic presentation of the method, but in a way, it presents the method in a practical, simple style that can be grasped. It simply refers to the practicality of the method and how reasonable it is. What Miskawayh wants to say, can be summarized: Revelation precedes reason.

By stating that religion comes before philosophy, Miskawayh is preparing the ground for his didactical morality, i.e. the readiness of the child to be taught at the beginning of his life and, then, the growth and development of reason from potentiality to actuality makes him

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.32. (The translation of "Sharī^ca" as 'law' even with a capital (L) will not render the right meaning of Islamic Law which is meant to stand for revelation.)

mature enough to handle problems of philosophy. This is actually based on Miskawayh's thesis on mind and sense in his Treatise on Mind and Soul; he holds the opinion that,

Sense is associated with /reason/ or mind, not vice versa but sense appears in us before reason, i.e. we have used our sense since the time of our creation. Mind, however, appears in us later, though it precedes sense in existence.¹

Miskawayh, here, is stating that /Mind/ or /Reason/ exists potentially in us since birth, but we come to use it actually after we are mature enough. If this is the state of our mental development, then naturally we cannot philosophize, i.e. use reason proper, unless we are well trained to use our minds actively. Miskawayh, then, is consistent in trying to reconcile reason and religion. To state that religion comes first is consistent with the precedence of sense to mind in time-lapse. Childhood for him is the right time for instruction and the Sharī^ca is the right instruction for that purpose. The Sharī^ca, then, sets the example to be followed by children in their future life, and about which they will later reason.

Paley, the Christian philosopher of the 18th century, has a similar way of reasoning. He considers morality as the

1. Miskawayh, A Treatise on Soul and Mind, from Badawi's, Studies and Texts in the Philosophy and Science of the Arabs, p.58.

science which teaches men their duty and the reasons for it.¹

As to why this science should be studied, Paley's answer is that:

Without it, the rules of life, by which men are ordinarily governed, oftentimes mislead them, through a defect either in the rule, or in the application.²

The rules which should govern life, according to Paley, are:

These rules are the Law of Honour, the Law of the Land, and the Scriptures.³

In examining how we can possibly teach such a combination of positive and divine rules, he maintains that positive laws are not so important or necessary as the Scriptures. We learn morality from Scripture by way of example, because morality to him is a practical science, thus he writes,

And this is the way in which all practical sciences are taught, as Arithmetic, Grammar, Navigation, and the like. Rules are laid down, and examples are subjoined: not that

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.1.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

these examples are the cases, much less all the cases which will actually occur, but by way only of explaining the principle of the rule, and as so many specimens of the method of applying it.¹

Paley adds later:

The above considerations are intended to prove, that the scriptures do not supersede the use of the science of which we profess to treat, and to acquit them of any charge of imperfection or insufficiency.²

Here Paley is trying to reconcile practical reason and revelation; the outcome will be the science of morals.

It seems here that Miskawayh is more precise and straightforward in his approach to the question of reason and revelation. R. Walzer considers this conciliatory attitude as a kind of conversion; he says,

Miskawayh is a convert to philosophy. Through philosophy alone man can become perfect and happy, happy in this world and in the world to come. It is the road to salvation... and the only true education (adab haqiqi). The upbringing which could guarantee this aim should be based on habituation as offered by the established religious tradition (adab al-Shari'a): this tradition provides truth in religious form, accessible to the child's mind as well as to those who have by the limitations of their nature no access to philos-

1. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.4.

2. Ibid.

ophical understanding.¹

Miskawayh could be considered as a convert to philosophy, but certainly he does not consider philosophy alone as a road to salvation. The fact that he depends on religion 'Sharī^ca' as a tool of instruction proves the limitation of reason according to his own analysis.

Miskawayh succeeds, in the previous examples, to reconcile reason and revelation in practical philosophy. Actually this practical sense of morality moves Miskawayh, as it moves Paley, towards a search for a moral end and, hence, a utilitarian trend occurs as a result of this social happy end, or benevolent end, or altruistic hedonism (universal hedonism). This utilitarian trend is not separate from the religious outlook of his moral philosophy. G.E. Grunebaum explains this coherent ethico-religious aspect of reason in Miskawayh's moral philosophy as follows,

A Hellenizing philosopher such as Miskawayh cannot reconcile himself to the thought that any injunction of the Sharī^ca could lack a direct relation to an inborn disposition or need of man. Companionableness or "social feeling", uns, is an elementary human trait. It is to cultivate this trait that the sari^ca imposed the duty to perform the five daily prayers in common rather than in isolation. The purpose of that community prayer is, as Miskawayh expressly states, to actualize the natural companionableness which is in man in potentia. The Friday Service, which will

1. Walzer, R., "Some Aspects of Miskawayh's Tahdhib al-Akhlaq", from Greek into Arabic, edited by Walzer himself, pp.232-233.

will bring together people from different parts of town, the two principal festivals of the Muslim year, which will unite villagers with townspeople, and even the pilgrimage to Mecca, which unites Muslims from every country, are viewed, and if you wish accounted for, by the same consideration.¹

What Grunebaum did not observe is the utilitarian end which Miskawayh aims at here, i.e. love and happiness. These Cibādāt, are a daily practice towards the achievement of love and happiness. In T.A., Miskawayh mentions this practice of the innate disposition to companionableness as the purpose or end, in other words, utilitarian end of the Cibāda.²

1. Grunebaum, G.E. von, "Concept and Function of Reason in Islamic Ethics", from Oriens, Vol.15, 1962, p.6. C.f. Miskawayh, T.A., pp.127-128.

2. This can only be true about material benefits of Cibādah in this world, apart from the spiritual benefits in this world and in the hereafter. Miskawayh uses the word 'la'alla' "Wala'alla al-Sharī'a" (perhaps) to denote that which he is suggesting to have been the aim or purpose of these. Cibādāt is his own 'ijtihād' (research), and not something that should be thought of as inherent in these religious obligations, the pros and cons of which one does not have to argue about, unless one is making 'ijtihād' about his own experience of the utility of these Cibādāt here and now: This is actually what Miskawayh has been doing. In his paper, Grunebaum draws the conclusion that reason for the West is a task to be accomplished, but for Islam it is a testimony to a reasoned order already in existence. (Grunebaum, ibid.).

As one can see from the example of community prayer, Friday prayer and Muslim Festivals, given by Miskawayh, even those Cibādāt which are prescribed by the Qurān and Sunna, can be turned into a social task to be accomplished to transform the Muslim society into a united group and indeed to transform different Muslim groups into a united Muslim Umma; the example of Hajj is the best testimony. One has only to look into the utility of the Cibāda. Reason as such, i.e. a utilitarian end, will be directed towards an end to be achieved rather than reasoning about facts and prescriptions already in existence, because it is a utilitarian reason, a reason which is directed towards a useful end, and it is also directed towards a task to be accomplished. If Grunebaum, however, deduced from the conditions of Muslims at the present what Islamic reason is, then he must have known that what is, is not necessarily in conformity with what ought to be.

This end of natural companionableness can be found in Paley's moral sense approach, which is built on a different social attitude, i.e. self-love instead of love of others. The outcome is a utilitarian end based mainly on a social-return: 'do as you would be done by'. This Christian dictum is turned by Paley in the direction of self-love, instead of turning it in the real Christian direction, the direction of 'love your neighbour as yourself', i.e. equal love, for self and others, not a kind of imbalanced love of self, which accomodates for others by way of selfish desires and selfish feelings. ¹

Miskawayh, however, is keen to see his utility working. He wants to see that Islamic Law plays a part in the upbringing of children, but when they grow up they have to devote themselves to philosophy, which is the highest kind of wisdom; he explains his views about this, as follows,

From what we have already said, it follows that there are four kinds of happy people, which we can determine by examination and perception. Thus, we find the kind of man who is good and virtuous from the beginning of his life. We observe his intelligence since childhood, and in his youth we perceive in him the aptitude for success by his modesty and noble disposition, his preference for the company of the good and for the friendship of the virtuous, and his aversion to their opposites. But as we have said before, he cannot reach this condition without receiving

1. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, op. cit., pp.1, 5, 10, 19, 20.

attention from the time of his birth. We also find the man who does not possess this quality at the beginning of his life. He is like all other children, but he strives, works hard and seeks the truth whenever he sees people disagreeing about it.¹

If this becomes the educational practice for the citizen then it should lead him to the expected happiness.

The kind of happiness which Miskawayh is aspiring to achieve by this reconciliatory method is twofold:-

The part of happiness which has got something to do with material happiness and the other part of it which has got something to do with the spiritual happiness, which means to Miskawayh an eternal happiness congruent with the eternity of the soul. Material happiness satisfies bodily needs, which process is called practical virtue, and it originates from the faculties of the soul which are concerned with bodily pleasures and desires, i.e. the concupiscent and irascible faculties. Whereas spiritual happiness satisfies a spiritual need. This process is called theoretical virtue, and it originates from the rational faculty of the soul.²

Happiness can be attained also as a perfection of man. Perfection of man being for Miskawayh the achievement and satisfaction of the purpose of his creation. Certain-

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.153-154.

2. Ibid., pp.10-15.

ly perfection does not pertain to the bodily faculties, since they are by nature subservient to the rational soul. ¹*

Paley, on the other hand, asserts the role of the scripture in Morality,

Without entering into a detail of scripture morality, which would anticipate our subject, the following general positions may be advanced, I think with safety.

1. That a state of happiness is not to be expected by those who are conscious of no moral or religious rule...

Paley then mentions the second position as:

That a state of happiness is not to be expected by those who reserve to themselves the habitual practice of any one sin, or neglect of one known duty. Because no obedience can proceed upon proper motives, which is not universal; that is, which is not directed to every command of God alike, as they stand upon the same authority... and because... When our duties are recited, they are put collectively, that is, as all and every of them required in the Christian character.²

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.12-14. C.f. K.S., (writer's translation), pp.4-6.

*By achievement of creation he means the use of rational soul concerning will and choice. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.III, Ch.4.51113^{b5-10}, where Aristotle is talking about deliberation and choice of voluntary actions.

^cIzzat does not refer to the perfection of man in the Book of Happiness in Moral Philosophy, which is one of the important key themes of the book. It is through this perfection of man qua man that man aspires for his happiness and the ultimate happiness too. ^cIzzat, Abd al-^cAziz, in Ibn Miskawayh, p.339.

2. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, pp.23-24.

It seems that Paley like Miskawayh is haunted by the concept of happiness as an end of moral action. A state of happiness is an achievement of both moral and religious rule:

That state of happiness is not to be expected by those who are conscious of no moral or religious rule...¹

He also refers to happiness as a result of a perfect deed or a refined character which does not take to sins or neglect duties:

That a state of happiness is not to be expected by those who reserve themselves to habitual practice of any one sin, or neglect of one known duty.²

The achievement of what is man's duty or perfection (a man who is not taking to the life of sins), has been expressed by Miskawayh in the Book of Happiness as the perfection of man, i.e. what is expected of man qua man. Miskawayh states that,

Some of the things which we have just enumerated could be called happiness metaphorically and some are real happiness and some are thought to be happiness and are not happiness at all. This is because those ends which are

1. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.23.

2. Ibid.

common to man and animals are not happiness to us because they are not our end and perfection as human beings qua human beings. As to those ends which pertain to man qua man, they could be called happiness, but this is common to all people.¹

The difference between the two conceptions is that Miskawayh thinks in terms of a Muslim character; this is why he has to resort to Islamic Law to support his claim for perfection and universality. The same is true of Paley; he resorts to Christian character to assert the perfect qualities which he claims to bring about this happy end he is looking for. Paley sums briefly the features of the Christian character as follows:

Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience and to patience godliness and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.²

His model of Christian character is a blend of practical, theoretical and religious virtues. This presentation of the Christian character fits well in the method of reconciliation of reason and revelation, although there is a great tendency towards the Scripture as a source of morality. This is consistent with Paley's definition of virtue which is:

the doing good to mankind, in obedience to

1. Miskawayh, K.S., (writer's translation), p.5.

2. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.24.

the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.¹

He goes further to explain that,

"the good of mankind" is the subject; the "will of God" the rule; "everlasting happiness" the motive of human virtue.²

We can see here, that perfection leads to virtue and virtue leads to happiness; this is why happiness is given priority in the statement of the principle of utility.

Thus Paley states the principle of utility as,

Actions are to be estimated by their tendency to promote happiness. Whatever is expedient is right. It is the ability of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it.³

A comparison can be drawn from Miskawayh's own lifestyle which leads him from "life of sin" (imperfection) to a life without sin (perfection) and this leads him to look for virtue and eventually happiness emerges as a utilitarian end for life on earth and a transcendental happiness to be looked for in the search for wisdom as

1. Paley, W., Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.19.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

a highest kind of happiness in this life.¹ Transcendental happiness should also be aspired for in the life to come.² A contrast, however, can also be shown between the tendency towards egoistic hedonism in Paley's approach, i.e. the tendency towards what is expedient. At this point Paley is not clear about 'what is expedient', i.e. whether it is something to do with the community at large or whether it is something to do with the individual alone. This, however, can be made clear if we consider what Paley has to say about human action in general. He says,

Mankind acts more from habit than reflection.³

As to why mankind should act from habit rather than from deliberation, he answers,

It is on few only and great occasions that men deliberate at all; on fewer still, that they institute anything like a regular enquiry into the moral rectitude or depravity of what they are about to do; or wait for the result of it. We are for the most part determined at once; and by an impulse which is the effect and energy of pre-established habits.⁴

This idea of habit is brought in by Paley to help in the establishment of a society adaptable to the Scripture.

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.81-85.

2. Ibid. C.f. K.S., Passim.

3. Paley, W., The Principles of Moral & Political Philosophy, p.20.

4. Ibid.

It is based on the moral sense theory, which advocates intuitive, instinctive morality and pays no heed to reason. Paley listens to reason only when it is the word of Scripture. Paley, however, ends up with egoistic hedonism, which he tries to reconcile with utilitarianism; this is why he has been criticized by J. Plamenatz as a pseudo-utilitarian. Plamenatz says,

Paley's reconciliation is more mechanical and less plausible. It may be that the cause of virtue is further from his heart, that, having, like James Mill, derived benevolence from the selfish passions, he is more to keep their origins constantly in view. It is for this reason only that Paley, rather than Bentham or James Mill, deserves to be called a pseudo-utilitarian.¹

Yet, it is difficult to consider Paley as a pseudo-utilitarian not so much for the reason that he starts off from selfish premises but rather because his utility principle is irreconcilable with the concept of habit in morality. If habit is the criterion of moral attitude why utilitarianism? The only answer which Paley could possibly think of is that, if God is the greatest utilitarian, then I am a utilitarian too.

Miskawayh passes the experience of intuition and rationality of moral actions successfully because he, as a philosopher, knows what is expected of him as a Muslim philosopher, especially in the circles of the ministers and their entourage. Miskawayh, then, opts for the

1. Plamenatz, J., The English Utilitarians, pp.51-52.

division of faculties of the soul and eventually the divisions of actions into spiritual and physical, ^{so that} some of our physical behaviour can be said to be habitual, i.e. psychological reflexive actions, e.g.,

One kind is natural and originates in the temperament, as in the man whom the least thing moves to anger or who is aroused for the least cause, or in the man who is cowardly in the face of the most trifling incident - who is afraid of a noise which strikes his ear or is terrified by the news which he hears - or who bursts into excessive laughter at the least thing that pleases him, or is saddened and distressed because of the least trouble that befalls him.¹

However, some other physical actions are deliberate and necessitate the use of will and choice, e.g.

The best of men is he who is most capable of performing actions proper to him [as man] and most strongly attached to the requirements of his substance which distinguishes him from other existents.²

Miskawayh then describes reflection as

"The best reflection is reflection upon what is best." Then reflection declines from one grade to another until it reaches the level

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.29.

2. Ibid., pp.12-13.

of the consideration of possible things in the realm of sense.¹

Then he illustrates with examples, as follows,

the faculty which has to do with reflection, discernment, and the consideration of the realities of things; the faculty which finds expression in anger, intrepidity, the risking of dangers, and the desire for dominance, self-esteem, and the different kinds of honour, and the faculty by which we have passion, the quest for food, and the desire for the pleasures derived from food, drink, sexual intercourse, and various sexual enjoyments.²

As to spiritual division of action, it belongs to the rational soul which is concerned with the quest for wisdom and happiness. This is the standard of philosophers, i.e. like Aristotle. Miskawayh, here, seems to have developed his own argument about Aristotle's views on reason and intellect in F.A., as he says,

so the soul when it wishes to perceive intelligibles, moves to its perfection and turns its attention to reason (in which all the intelligibles are present) in order that it may obtain all matters of knowledge and become perfect, and form complete unity with the intellect. This movement of the soul is called vision and thought.³

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.14.

2. Ibid., pp.14-15.

3. Miskawayh, Al-Fawz al-Asghar; see Sweetman, J.W., Islam and Christian Theology, Part.I, V.I, p.125.

He explains the function of the rational soul as,

The fact is that the rational soul perceives all particulars and universals by one power, although the method of perception is different. Aristotle illustrates¹ this by saying that the rational soul perceives simple intelligibles by a straight line, i.e., directly, and without a medium, and composite sensibles by a crooked line, i.e. by the medium of the senses.²

This completes the picture of Miskawayh's articulation of his reconciliatory attitude between reason, revelation, intuition and intellection, (rational approach to morality). Moreover, he succeeds in keeping his rational utilitarian ends within an ethico-religious framework, yet he opts for a reconciliation between the two Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle.

Both Miskawayh and Paley fit quite well in the category which has been described by Hume³ as a justification for a way of life. The difference between them is that Paley tends towards universalistic hedonism* and Miskawayh tends towards what can be called a rule utilitarian approach, involving altruistic, rationalistic and universal features of rule-utilitarianism, i.e. it combines

1. Aristotle, De Anima, Bk.III, Ch.4, 429^{b131f}.

2. Miskawayh, Al-Fawz al-Asghar; c.f. Sweetman, op. cit., Passim.

3. Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, p.69.

4. Sidgwick, H., The Methods of Ethics, pp.

* Universalistic Hedonism in Paley's Christian Philosophy can be contrasted with universalistic altruism in Miskawayh's Islamic Philosophy (C.f. Sidgwick, op. cit., pp.121-122).

universality of Islamic traditions and philosophic rationalism.

CHAPTER VI

MISKAWAYH AND MILL:

THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF MISKAWAYH'S UTILITARIANISM

It must be pointed out at the outset that there is no sharp distinction between the subject matter of this chapter and the previous ones, except that in this chapter the social and the religious will go together as part of the same process, i.e. ethico-religious justification of utilitarian reasoning. The ethico-religious aspect is basic to Miskawayh's utilitarian tendency and it is acceptable at the same time as part of Mill's utilitarian experience and, indeed, as a human feeling too. There are some similarities and contrasts between the philosophies of Mill and Miskawayh:

a) They both start off with happiness as an end to be attained and they differ as to the general principle of happiness as a criterion of the rightness and wrongness of actions judged by their consequences. Mill holds the opinion that happiness is the criterion of the rightness and wrongness of actions, whereas Miskawayh does not; instead he refers to Islamic Law as the instrument of guidance and correction. So the difference here is that, to Miskawayh, Sharī^ca / [Islamic Law] is the criterion of the rightness and wrongness of actions. ¹

b) They both accept the broad definition of happiness

1. Miskawayh, I.A., Passim.

as promotion of pleasures and avoidance of pain, and they shun grovelling animal qualities as resultant consequences for happy ends.

- c) They both accept the social background for what is, in the case of Mill, a utilitarian system and, for Miskawayh, a utilitarian tendency.

Justice is a supportive principle to their claims to social benevolence or Rationalistic Benevolence. They can both be categorized as rule-utilitarians without distortion or abuse to the developed sense of R.U.

This chapter will be concerned with the comparisons and contrasts between the two philosophers with reference to these points. Mill's philosophy supplies the background on which Miskawayh's philosophy will be presented as it either compares or contrasts with Mill's philosophy. In cases where there is no argument to be made on behalf of Miskawayh, the text will be interpreted so as not to distort it, misuse language or abuse philosophy.

(a) Mill states his utility principle as a first, a priori principle, partly gained by immediate knowledge, i.e. known directly by experience; and partly empirical knowledge, sensual knowledge, i.e. physical. Mill states the problem as:

The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, utility, or the greatest happiness principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness,

wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain: by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.¹

By happiness, he means the promotion of pleasure and the absence of pain. Happiness is supposed to be an end and a consequence of action.

Miskawayh's statement of the utilitarian tendency is that,

With the help of God (exalted is He!), we begin this discourse by stating the difference between the good and happiness, after quoting the words of Aristotle in imitation of him and in acknowledgement of what is due to him. So we say: The good, as he defined it and according to the view of the ancients which he approved, is that towards which all things aim, i.e. the ultimate end. And anything which is useful towards that end is called a good.

As to happiness, it is the good in relation to its possessor and constitutes to him a perfection. Happiness then is a good. The happiness of man may be different from the happiness of the horse; and the happiness of everything lies in its particular completion and perfection.²

In another proposition in Kitāb al-Sa^cāda (Book of Happiness), he elucidates what he meant by Ultimate Happiness and happiness as a good. He maintains that Ultimate Happiness is the long-term perfection of man, by which

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.257.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., 3, p.69. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.III, Ch.I, 1094^{a1-15}.

it can be said that one man is more human than another by way of his achievement of ultimate perfection, i.e. the qualities which distinguish man from animal.

As to the goods which are common to man and animal, this as Miskawayh says is what people call the pleasant al-ladhīdh.¹ Miskawayh here wants to distinguish between higher pleasures which are the pleasures that distinguish man from animal from lower pleasures, 'what people call the pleasant'. It seems from this account that Miskawayh and Mill agree on the final end or ultimate end, which is the 'Greatest Happiness' for Mill, and 'Ultimate Happiness' for Miskawayh, and that it should be an end of human actions. Mill has left the concept of pleasure vulnerable to criticism because he does not specify what pleasures and what pains. He later decides that the pleasures he means are human high pleasures; he agrees with Miskawayh that animal qualities are imperfections; he says,

It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied, and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But we can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which these imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig are of a different opinion, it is because they

1. Miskawayh, K.S., (Writer's translation), pp.5-6.

only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.¹

These actually are typical of the words used by Miskawayh to denote lower and higher pleasures.

Miskawayh writes,

We shall state in another place that the nature of all [pleasures] is the same, that they are all experienced by man only after certain pains which affect him, and that sensual pleasure is a deliverance from pain or suffering. It will appear then that he who is content to seek the bodily pleasures and makes them his goal and his extreme happiness has consented to place himself in the meanest servitude to the meanest of lords, since he makes his noble soul, wherein he resembles the angels, a slave of the base soul wherein he resembles the pigs, worms and the lowest of animals that share this condition with him.²

It appears that Miskawayh is denouncing physical pleasures, but actually he is not, all he is revolting against is the devotion of time and energy to these pleasures, which could have been foregone for some higher aspiration. This position would bring him closer to

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.260.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.40. C.f. Galen, The Book of Ethics, edited by Krauss, p.34 (Arabic Text). Miskawayh is influenced by Galen's description of pleasure which goes as follows:

"He who chooses pleasure as an end and not the beautiful, has chosen a place of a pig instead of a place of an angel" (p.34, op. cit.).

Galen himself has been influenced by the stoic's position that knowledge... (Cont'd)

Mill. Certainly, Mill does not take a different position and attitude towards physical pleasures, but when it comes to the wise and perfect choice, he would rather choose the perfect and noble than the imperfect and mean. Indeed, the way both Mill and Miskawayh summarize the distinction between the higher and lower pleasures is almost the same.

It is because of the fact that 'the other party to the comparison knows both sides', Mill thinks that the human being and Socrates know what it is to be noble and to be mean. This is an explicit reference to the actual deliberation which is taking place in the process of the comparison between the perfect and the imperfect, the mean and the noble. It also refers to the Socratic dictum that 'Virtue is knowledgeable'.

This is actually the starting point in Miskawayh's moral philosophy, i.e. the teachability of virtue or morality. On the other hand, he concludes that,

He who is content to seek bodily pleasures and makes them his goal and his extreme happiness has consented to place himself in the meanest servitude to the meanest Lords, since he makes his noble soul, wherein he resembles the angels, a slave of the base soul wherein he resembles the pigs, worms and the lowest

(Cont'd)... and wisdom distinguishes the wise from the unwise. Mill mentions the stoic and Christian elements in answer to an accusation made by his critics that the kinds of pleasures presented by his Utilitarianism are Epicurean; he answers that:

"I do not consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian elements require to be included." (Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.258).

The pleasure then which makes an end or a consequence utilitarian should include Epicurean as well as Christian and Stoic elements. Thus Miskawayh and Mill, though chronologically separated in time, find a common source in the ideas of Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics.

of animals that share this condition with him.¹

Again, here, there is an element of comparison which involves deliberation and there is also the knowledge which makes one party of the comparison ignorant and the other knowledgeable. In simple terms, both Mill and Miskawayh are concerned about the distinction of the human party of the comparison, and that it has certain particular and peculiar qualities, which make the difference between the human and the non-human in man.

As to the relation between pleasure and happiness, both Mill and Miskawayh agree with Russell that

All judgements as to what is useful depend upon judgements as to what has value on its own account.²

Thus Miskawayh states that,

The noblest of actions is the one which is not done for any other thing, but for its own sake, and every action which is done for another end and anything else, that thing would be nobler than the action.³

What is noblest is certainly 'good' and every 'good',

1. Miskawayh, T.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.40.

2. Russell, B., Problems of Philosophy, p.42.

3. Miskawayh, H. wa Sh., Problem 68, pp.180-181. (Arabic version - it has been rendered into English by the writer).

according to Miskawayh,¹ is useful. But would it be valuable on its own account? Miskawayh's answer is that for the action to be useful on its own account, it must be an end on its own, without being useful for any other end, which is the same as Russell's proposition. To Mill the situation is not different in that, whatever produces more happiness, should be useful and an end.² The connection between happiness and pleasure being: the consequence of action. Mill and Miskawayh both agree that some pleasures are material and some are mental, and the mental shall be pursued for their own sake, whereas the same pleasures for Miskawayh are consequences of actions. He says,

The seeker of happiness should, therefore, strive for the life that is delightful to him and so be pleased by it always, for this life is one and is delightful in itself, and this is why we have said that he should always desire it and keep firmly attached to it forever.³

Miskawayh elaborates on the connection between pleasure and happiness,

As to types of life, being distinguished by the three ends towards which men aim, are three in number (I mean the life of pleasure, the life of honour, and the life of wisdom)

1. This is actually the Aristotelian Miskawayh.

2. Dryer, D.P., "Mill's Utilitarianism", in The Collected Works of J.S. Mill, edited by Robson, p.VMX.

3. Miskawayh, I.A., p.83.

and the life of wisdom is the noblest and the most complete, and as the virtues of the soul are many in number, it is necessary that man's superiority and nobility be the result of the most superior and the noblest of these virtues. Thus, the life of the virtuous happy man is a life which is delightful in itself because all their deeds are voluntary and deserve praise. Each one takes pleasure in what is dear to him; the just man delights in justice and the wise man in wisdom. The good deeds and ends that are attainable through virtues are delightful and lovable. For happiness is the most delightful of all things.¹

The kind of pleasure which is associated with happiness, according to Miskawayh, is a pure pleasure, a feeling of satisfaction for the attainment of a happy end; psychological satisfaction so to speak. For this reason any subordinate happiness, i.e. happiness which is 'good', to be attained, is associated with pleasure. Pleasure, then, which is the consequence of doing a moral action is not necessarily physical. Miskawayh, however, does not write physical pleasures off. On the contrary, he provides for both physical and mental pleasures in his philosophy. In his Treatise on 'al-ladhdhāt wa-al-ālām' ('Pleasures and Pains'), he writes that,

If there is no perfection, there would not have been any pleasure. If there is no pleasure, there wouldn't have been any love or endearment, and no dispute, no desire. If these were non-existents, there wouldn't have been any motion. If there were no motion there wouldn't have been any generation or corruption.²

1. Miskawayh, I.A., (trans. by Zurayk), p.83.

2. Miskawayh, "A Treatise on Pleasure and Pain", included in Badawī's collection: Studies and Texts in the Philosophy and Science of the Arabs, p.98 (Arabic Text).

If perfection is a human end, then pleasure is a human trait; a man who does not enjoy pleasure does not exist, and does not live a human life. So the world which does not allow pleasure, is a world of nothingness and not a world of Being and Corruption. Miskawayh, here, has been philosophical about degrees of pleasures, yet he preserves the Muslim sense of pleasure, i.e. satisfaction of both body and spirit. The equivalent of this subordination and co-ordination of pains and pleasures in connection with happiness amounts, in Mill's philosophy, to a combination of ultimate principles, 'Greatest Happiness' and subordinate ones in the implementation of a utilitarian system, e.g. 'keep promises', 'don't lie' and the like.¹ Mill, by subordinate principles, is suggesting a utilitarian end, whereby the greatest happiness principle will not be the only end attainable, but there is room for other principles to work side by side with the Greatest Happiness principle to produce pleasures and reduce pains in the society. the Greatest Happiness principle will supply Universal Rules necessary for society or legislation and these Rules can be instrumental for changing the lower hierarchical order of rules and moral conduct. According to R.U. one has to act in such a way that his action may become a Universal Rule, that is the consequence of the action. To Miskawayh, the consequence of action ought to be an end, a happy end, which is pleasant and beautiful. The utility of the action constitutes this element of joy, the joy of the beautiful which is not physical but good in itself. The praiseworthy action is good, useful, beautiful, pleasant and it leads to a happy end.

1. C.f. Chapter III, Sect.II of this thesis, passim.

(c) The problem, however, which faced Mill's utilitarian principle, i.e. the Greatest Happiness is that happiness and pleasure as consequences of actions cannot be taken as the sole criterion of rightness or wrongness of actions. A certain action X may lead to a consequence Y, which is neither happy nor pleasant, yet the action itself could be right, e.g. a man gave his son a medicine for treatment, but it turned out to be the wrong medicine and the son did not get well; instead his condition got even worse. This obviously is not a pleasant or happy end. If this man is a utilitarian, he would have thought that his action was wrong because the consequence wasn't pleasant and the end wasn't happy. This, however, is not the case. A utilitarian would have argued that the end, as far as the action was concerned, was supposed to bring about a happy end and a pleasant consequence. This supposition is always the motive of the utilitarian for doing the action will bring about a happy end. Mill's answer to such question would, however, be that: man is to learn from experience what to accept and what to reject and act according to previous knowledge, but we do not expect a utilitarian to start afresh, beginning each time he decides to do an action.

The knowledge of the Sacred Book in Christianity, for example, does not necessitate consulting the Bible every time one decides to act according to the teaching of the Bible.¹ Mill is not, therefore, opting for a strict calculation of pleasures and pains or determination of happiness as an inevitable moral end of the action. It is something that one has to consider beforehand, yet

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.275.

the consequence cannot be definitely right or wrong, but if everything goes as planned by a utilitarian they should.

If utility, then, is not in consequence with 'what is good' or 'what is right', why then be a utilitarian at all?

The question which should be answered by both Mill and Miskawayh, is: are the good, and the principle of utility, i.e. the maximization of happiness, contradictory?

Dr. Z. Ibrāhīm in his series, Philosophical Problems /The Moral Problem / argues that,

It is not strange that: when everything disappears in that grey dye which we call (utility), then human life should become low and mean, without there being room for a search for something else that goes beyond grovelling material luxury.¹

This has been said in criticism of classical utilitarianism, i.e., Mill's Utilitarianism. It can be argued, however, that:

- a) Utility is not just a search for material happiness or material pleasure, it is also an instrument for change, social and moral, the rule of the law,

1. Ibrāhīm, Zakariyyā, Al-Mushkila al-Akhlāqiyya (The Moral Problem), p.178.

general discipline, personal benefits, and social reform.

b) It is observable that in all these cases, there is a relation between means and ends in which utility is a maxim of practical life.¹

Moreover, the relation between the good and utility in the case of Mill's system is a relation of consequence, because if the good or 'what is good' is material, then utility should be material, though it can be both material and spiritual. On the other hand, Mill preserves a place in his utilitarianism for Christian morality, this is why utility can go beyond the grey dye of materialism for some spiritual aspiration.²

Miskawayh, on the other hand, following in the footsteps of Aristotle, would argue that, the goods can be natural (material) as well as non-natural (spiritual), although this is an Aristotelian definition of 'what is good', yet, it does not contradict the sense of good in Islamic Law (Sharī^ca), because what is good linguistically and philosophically can either be naturalistic or idealistic (spiritual), which is something to do with absolute good - or ultimate end as far as Miskawayh is concerned. As such, then, utility can be material, whatever dye it is, dealing with the material part of life

1. Hartman, N., Ethics, Vol.I, Ch.X, pp.149-151.

2. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.273. He argues that, "If he meant that utilitarianism does not recognize the revealed will of God as the supreme law of morals, I answer, that a utilitarian who believes in the perfect goodness and wisdom of God, necessarily believes that whatever God has thought fit to reveal on the subject of morals, must fulfil the requirements of utility in a supreme degree".

This is really reminiscent of the religious philosophy of Paley. Mill here is supporting religious utilitarian view more than Paley. It also confirms that religious utilitarian trend in Miskawayh is not uncommon.

and also spiritual, giving satisfaction to man's drive towards the absolute. 'The Good', however, which is unanalysable, can only be attributed to divine good, i.e. cannot be explained in terms of what is human.

Miskawayh's argument for absolute good supported by external goods goes as follows,

Divine happiness - even though it is as noble as we have stated and even though its life is more delightful and noble than any other life - is still in need of other external kinds of happiness in order that it may be manifested through them; otherwise, it will be hidden and invisible.¹

It seems clearly here that Miskawayh provides for both material and spiritual pleasures as an integral part of happiness, which is the desired end. It is not, then, true that all utility can do is to add a materialistic dye to whatever end or consequence of action we aim at. But materialistic or non-materialistic, naturalistic or non-naturalistic, the human good is certainly useful.

To Mill, the utilitarian system cannot work in a vacuum; it needs a social background to sustain its claim to universality. To supply this background Mill, from the very beginning, expands the concept of happiness to include the greatest happiness of all; he also provides for the sacrifice of personal and private happiness for

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.84. These, however, are not the original words of Miskawayh. He is actually quoting Aristotle. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.X, Ch.7, 1177^b29-35 - 1178^a1-10.

the welfare of society, yet he holds the view that sacrifice would be too high a price for the system if it were not important nor necessary in the first place. Thus, he talks about the universality of the principle of utility,

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people) is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity or quality; the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison.¹

But how can this apparently happiness-oriented end, be at the same time a universal end?

Mill elaborates on this, saying,

This being, according to the utilitarian opinion, the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, pp.262-263.

only, but so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation.¹

From this argument, it can be proven that the end which is necessarily the standard of morality, is a kind of naturalistic end, i.e. a materialistic end, because it is liable to experimentation and observation. But the standard of morality drawn from these observations, subjective observation, will not make utilitarianism an objective system. To make up for this defect in the system, Mill appeals to moral rules as a universal guide for behaviour, not for a single individual, but for all mankind. This point brings Mill's utility up to the present day use of Rule-Utilitarianism, which describes the consequence of action as a universal-rule to be adopted by all mankind.

Miskawayh, in comparison with Mill, makes the kind of virtues that are directed to ultimate happiness, happiness which is an end of man qua man and his perfection, attainable only by people in a city, i.e. attainable by association alone. Miskawayh explains this point,

Furthermore, a person is said to possess one of these virtues and is praised for it only when it goes beyond him to others.²

This altruistic attitude constitutes the social background for the attainment of happiness. The virtues

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.263.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., (Zurayk trans.), p.16.

which are goods to those who possess them, are useful because they lead to a happy end and a pleasant end too. Pleasure to Miskawayh, in this context, does not mean a material or bodily pleasure; it means: the pleasure of achieving the end, i.e. a utilitarian oriented pleasure, the pleasure which accompanies happiness. Companionableness can be achieved by a utilitarian method, i.e. by way of association to attain the happiness of all. Miskawayh writes:

But virtues are not non-existences; they are actions and deeds which are manifested when one participates and lives with other people, and has dealings and various kinds of association with them. Indeed, we teach and learn the human virtues by the aid of which we live and mingle with other people, so that we may attain, from and by these virtues, other kinds of happiness when we pass to another state which does not exist for us at present.¹

This social spirit makes it inevitable for virtues to go beyond the individual to others in society and it also makes the good which ensues from these virtues a useful good, and it must be a useful good since it must go beyond the possessor of virtue to other members of the society.

Miskawayh, however, goes beyond the naturalistic good and material happiness to ultimate good and spiritual happiness or complete happiness; this is a kind of transcendental happiness and eternal wisdom. Thus he says,

1. Miskawayh, I.A., (Zurayk trans.), p.26. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.X, Ch.8, 1178^{b6-7}; Miskawayh seems to have quoted Aristotle.

Further, you should know that one does not need, when in the company of the good spirits, i.e. those that are free from bodies, any of the kinds of bodily happiness which we have mentioned, but only the happiness of the soul, that is, only the eternal intelligibles which in fact constitute wisdom. Thus, so long as man is man, he cannot have complete happiness unless he achieves both states and these can be completely obtained only by means of the things which lead to eternal wisdom.¹

By things which lead to eternal wisdom, Miskawayh means, material or external goods, i.e. useful things ('ashyā' nāfi^ca). He adds that man can be either in a state pervaded by bodily things attaining material pleasure and, yet, at some time aspiring for spiritual things and looking forward to them, or, on the other hand, in a state pervaded by spiritual things and yet, at the same time, observing lower things and learning from them.² This is typical of the Aristotelian state of mental ecstasy, where man lives according to reason and enjoys the best and pleasantest life, because reason is the essence of man. Therefore, the life of reason is the happiest.³

Miskawayh's concept of happiness is more or less a replica of the Aristotelian concept of happiness, which is, in a sense, living the essence of man, i.e. the life of reason or wisdom. It is not also far from the sense of good in Plato's Republic, which is desired for its own sake and for its utility.⁴

1. Miskawayh, I.A., (Zurayk trans.), p.75.

2. Ibid., pp.75-76.

3. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.X, Ch.7, 1178^{a5-8}.

4. Plato, Republic, Bk.II, 357^{b-c-d}.

Such pleasure is expected of altruistic universal ends, which are done for the sake of complete happiness of mankind in this life and also involves a transcendental aspiration for higher pleasures and happiness in a life of wisdom and a life to come in the hereafter.¹

Miskawayh's altruism does qualify as a universal doctrine, being supported by his concept of happiness; they can work together to produce a Rule Utilitarian system, in which Sharī^c is the Universal Rule, whose ends and aims are designed by the Law Maker, i.e. God, who is called in Islam Al-Nāfi^c, the Benefactor or the Useful. He can be the Greatest Utilitarian, in the sense that he requires His Rules to be Useful and Universal. This is not to delete the intrinsic moral qualities of 'useful', 'good', 'bad', 'right', 'wrong', 'praiseworthy' and 'blameworthy', etc.; e.g. the 'Good' which pertains to God is absolute (in Moore's terms unanalysable, but only in this context), but the good which pertains to man is both moral and naturalistic. Unlike the universalistic hedonism of Paley, which, having fallen short of altruistic elements to establish a utilitarian system, appeals to God as the Greatest Utilitarian, who determines the distribution of happiness to fill the gap between man's selfishness and his aspiration for universal principles; Miskawayh's utilitarian trend depends on Islamic Rules as universal principles designed to fit the rational altruistic qualities of man, who is responsible for the implementation of the Rules. If the designer of the rule is also the maker of man, who knows his nature because he created this nature, then the Rules can be universal by appealing to the nature of man

1. Miskawayh, I.A., pp.76-77.

and his capacities and perfections, as well as appealing to the Law Maker, in this case, it is Allah the Greatest. This is obviously what has been done by Miskawayh. In effect, what Miskawayh has done is similar to Mill's appeal to human experience and experiments, i.e. the historical development of man's consciousness of his perfections and pertinent human qualities.

Miskawayh summarizes this blend of God-given Laws and Rules and man's own research on earth to bring about peace, love and happy ends, as follows,

Common people, virtuous people and the prophets, peace be upon them, were keen to lay down laws and rules for people so that congruence and coherence which are the cause of love and intimacy, occur among them, so that they can share in the goods and that a form of unity may happen to them, which is the cause of every virtue, and because of which companionableness takes place in the city, this is the cause of better life and the enjoyment of life and goods which are needed in this life.¹

This, then, is the background of the universal rule, which has been laid down by the Maker of man; this is why Miskawayh adds later, in an answer to a question about the aim and end of the soul in this world, that:

Man is the rational soul when it uses organic instruments which are called the body so that it can produce actions deliberately.²

1. Miskawayh, H. wa Sh., Problem 67, pp.178-179 (Arabic Text).

2. Ibid., p.181.

Needless to say that deliberation in actions pertains to the nature of man, i.e. to produce human actions depending on human experience. This is basic to Mill's utilitarian system since he counts on previous human knowledge and education, especially the bringing up of children as a basis for teaching the children how to cope with the happiness of others, i.e. an altruistic feeling. ¹

This is what Miskawayh sets himself to do in writing his books: 'The Refinement of Character' (Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq) and 'The Book of Happiness' (Kitāb al-Sa^cāda) or (Tartīb al-Sa^cādāt). To be precise, most of his books are devoted to the refinement of character in a virtuous city.

The mention of a virtuous city necessitates the mention of the king of virtues, the guardian of virtues, i.e. justice, which is considered by both Mill and Miskawayh as the backbone of the utilitarian system (or tendency or trend in the case of Miskawayh).²

Miskawayh, in his Treatise on Justice, defines justice as that virtue which constitutes the (1) natural, (2) conventional, and (3) divine, parts of justice. Natural justice is a kind of a balance between different forces of Nature, e.g. the balance between dry and wet lands on earth. This is a blend of Chemical and philosophical knowledge displayed by Miskawayh to answer a question

1. Mill, J., Utilitarianism, pp.268-269.

2. Although this tendency can be extracted from different texts and works of Miskawayh, yet, it does not form a system, i.e. a recognized system as Mill's. In order to make it look like a system one has to extrapolate.

by his friend, al-Tawhīdī, on the nature of justice.¹ As to conventional justice, it is of two kinds: (1) particular and (2) general. The general is that which is agreed upon by all people, like transactions in gold and such commercial deals. The particular one is agreed upon by people of different nations and different countries which concern the people of that particular nation or that country. In such cases, Miskawayh maintains that people are not obliged to follow a universal law, but they can have their own particular laws as befits the circumstances. There is also voluntary justice, which is found in man. This is a peaceful co-operation between the faculties of the soul, to prove superiority of the health of the soul over the health of the body. Divine justice exists in metaphysical things and is separated from matter.² It is observable here that, in an answer to the question about justice in al-Hawāmil wa-al-Shawāmil, Miskawayh postponed the lengthy answer to write this treatise, which is more or less, as Khān says, a display of Greek knowledge on the subject of justice.

Nevertheless, in T.A. Miskawayh tries to reconcile his Greek philosophy with his Islamic background. The outcome of this reconciliation is a kind of a utilitarian trend; he states this tendency as follows:-

By Justice, I mean equality which we have

1. Miskawayh, An Unpublished Treatise on Justice, edited by Khān, M.s., C.f. comments and footnotes on pp.1-11.

2. Ibid., pp.31-32. C.f. in the last line of a footnote on the treatise Khān says, "The sources of this treatise are mostly Greek," p.32.

discussed earlier. This is why we have said that the happy man is the one who has the chance in his childhood to become familiar with the Law (Shari^ca), to give himself up to it and to get accustomed to follow all its commands, and who, when he attains the stage in which he is able to comprehend motives and causes, takes up the study of philosophy and finds it in agreement with what had become ingrained in him by habit, with the result that his judgement becomes firm, his insight penetrating, and his determination effective.¹

The Law that is the revealed law of Islam, Shari^ca, Miskawayh says prescribes universal justice, but man can choose to act in accordance with benevolence with his fellow human beings. Then Miskawayh talks about love and friendship which help bring about a unified collectivity; he writes,

These people [who spoke thus about love] had in view the virtue of unification which is realized in a collectivity. Indeed, this is the noblest end for the people of a city. For if the citizens love one another, they will be in close relation, and each man will wish for his companion what he wishes for himself. Their numerous capacities will become one, and none of them will fail to arrive at a sound opinion or a right action.²

The efforts of this collectivity will be directed towards the establishment of a virtuous city; Miskawayh says,

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.115.

2. Ibid., p.118.

* This is exactly how Aristotle ends his N.E.; Miskawayh, although not... (Cont'd)

In all that they want to do, they will be like the person who wants to move a heavy weight by himself and is not able to do so, but if he is assisted by others he can then set it in motion. Indeed, the manager of the city aims, in all his measures, at binding its people by ties of affections. If he succeeds in attaining this aim in particular, he will achieve all the goods which will be difficult for him, or for the citizens to achieve individually.¹

And thus the happy end will be brought about as Miskawayh says,

He will then overcome his rivals, build up his country, and live happily with his subjects.²

In all this, Miskawayh is not relying on utility alone, but he is also keeping an eye on a strong belief, which occurs as a result of religious desire directed towards the Face of God.³

Mill, on the other hand, agrees with Miskawayh on the universality of law and the importance of justice to the utilitarian system to distinguish between morality as such and expediency.

(Cont'd)... deviating from Islamic morality, could have written proper Muslim Ethics if he were to substitute the concepts of love and friendship by the broad concept of brotherhood in Islam, which would have been the right concept for a socio-ethical change, e.g. the French Revolution centuries later used the concept of fraternity to effect a social change in 18th century France.

1. Miskawayh, I.A., p.118.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp.118-119.

To Mill, sympathy is vital (friendship in Miskawayh's philosophy) for human beings as well as for all sentient beings. He states very strongly that,

Human beings are capable of sympathizing not only with all human beings but also with all sentient beings.¹

Not only that he goes further to recommend Kant's universal rule,

Act so that the rule of your conduct might be adopted as a law by all rational beings,²

as a universal rule that should be adopted by all rational beings to benefit their collective interest.³

In elucidating the problem of the legitimacy of inflicting punishment, Mill's philosophy, strangely enough, is very Islamic. Mill elaborates on the issue by saying,

Again when the legitimacy of inflicting punishment is admitted, how many conflicting conceptions of injustice come to light in discussing the proper apportionment of punishments to offences. No rule recommends itself so strongly to the primitive and spontaneous

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.249.

2. Korner, S., Kant, p.134.

3. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.249.

sentiment of justice as the lex talionis, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Though this principle of the Jewish and the Mohammedan law has been generally abandoned in Europe as a practical maxim, there is, I suspect, in most minds a secret hankering after it; and when retribution accidentally falls on an offender in that precise shape, the general feeling of satisfaction evinced bears witness to which this repayment in kind is acceptable.¹

In these terms, Mill seems to be recommending the application of principles embodied in the revealed laws of Judaism and Islam as being latent in human consciousness. On the other hand, Miskawayh, who accepts the revealed law of Islam, seeks a rationale for this practice in terms of Greek philosophy. Thus there is a considerable agreement between the two philosophers in so far as this point is concerned.

Mill divides justice into individual and collective and makes the criterion of preference between the two, social utility alone.² He also provides room for laudable injustice, i.e. when moral requirements which are regarded as a result of social utility are superseded by an important social duty; in such cases it is allowable to steal and to kidnap.³ The equivalent of this in Islamic law is called "necessity law", i.e. necessity allows concessions with regard to prohibited things (al-ḍarūrāt tubīḥ al-mahzūrāt). Although Miskawayh does

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.313.

2. Ibid., p.314.

3. Ibid., pp.320ff.

not actually mention this, it can be understood implicitly in his adoption of the universality of Islamic Law.

Mill thus concludes his book on Utilitarianism with a chapter on the connection between utility and Justice.¹ Miskawayh concludes with justice 'Love and Friendship',² to safeguard the principle of Justice. Indeed, both Mill and Miskawayh end up with a recommendation for a virtuous city which, at the same time, safeguards the sanctity of the principle of justice.³

1. Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, p.321.

2. Miskawayh, I.A., p.123ff.

3. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

A student of Islamic philosophy would observe an effort exerted by Miskawayh to reconcile revealed knowledge and rational knowledge. This attitude has been accompanied all through by a sense of purpose, an aim and an end which Miskawayh sometimes calls the 'useful'. A book like Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq was written by Miskawayh for a particular purpose, i.e. so that moral behaviour becomes like a spontaneous moral response, i.e. dispositional. The Kitāb al-Sa^cāda / Book of Happiness / deals with the problem of moral improvement which is the aim of Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq and was written for the same reason, i.e. the acquisition of virtues through the study of the science of ethics, which is part of the study of philosophy. It is the practical aspect of philosophy.

What Miskawayh wants to do is to prove the teachability of virtue. He proves that the good is useful and tries to demonstrate that the useful is liable to instruction and learning, i.e. that virtue can be teachable and that the way to go about doing it, is through philosophy. The efforts towards moral improvement add up to something more than individual morality. Miskawayh is calling here for a social practice of morality, whereby man practices his human qualities. Thus man is distinguished from animal by this social awareness of the other. It

is to these social-human qualities that Miskawayh attributes 'goodness' and 'usefulness' of character. This is the element of utility in the moral philosophy of Miskawayh. As has been mentioned before, 'goodness' produces what is useful and this, in turn, leads to happiness as an end or a consequence of moral action.

But this utilitarianism, classical utilitarianism so to speak, is threefold: The rational element represents the method and attitude underlying the utilitarian practice. The religious tendency, which is basic to a reconciliatory method, i.e. religious 'prescriptions' and Islamic laws do not contradict the verdict of reason, as far as morality is concerned. The social element, however, is common to all aspects of utility, especially to these elements of Miskawayh's moral philosophy. Moreover, it supersedes all other elements, for it is pregnant with altruistic and universalistic qualities. The utility of these qualities in Miskawayh's philosophy does not neglect the intrinsic values of these qualities nor does it nullify their cash-values. By intrinsic values, I mean the moral qualities qua moral qualities, unaffected by external gains or losses. By cash-values I mean moral qualities as they are affected by external gains or losses. But Miskawayh's ethics, in general, is governed by a means end mechanism, geared towards the achievement of happiness, particular happiness, pertaining to the good of man and universal happiness pertaining to man qua man, i.e. all human beings. Afterwards comes ultimate happiness, which is also an ultimate end, an end beyond which there is no end; this is a kind of transcendental happiness which has been borrowed by Miskawayh from Neo-Platonic sources.

One of the problems, which Miskawayh's philosophy poses, is that man needs to practise the perfection which pertains to man, in order to attain the happiness which is designated by God for man. This I consider as a utilitarian end because it is composed of the goods of man, which are also useful, and this, again, is subdivided into particular goods, i.e. the good, which pertains to each and every individual, and the universal good, which pertains to mankind. This division of the good would label the utilitarian tendency in Miskawayh's philosophy as a rule-utilitarianism, because it is based on the maxim that the action, which produces the greatest happiness, is the action which is done as a universal rule for all mankind. The reward of happiness is not necessarily a material joy or pleasure. The distinction of pleasures can be classified in the same category as 'goods' or 'happiness' for that matter, i.e. the classification depends on the nature of man (man's perfection). The pleasures which pertain to man's nature and his perfection are the mental pleasures; this is why the study of ethics, practical philosophy ends up with a study of theoretical philosophy (wisdom) [hikma].¹ Again the hierarchy of pleasures, goods and different kinds of happiness is congruent with the epistemology of Miskawayh (his theory of knowledge), i.e. the reconciliation of religion and reason or reason and revelation. Within the context of this epistemology, priority is given to the qualities at the top of the hierarchy, i.e. of pleasures; mental pleasures are preferred to bodily, physical or material pleasures, because mental pleasures are pleasures which pertain to the nature and

1. Aristotle, N.E., 8kX, Ch.4, 1175^{a21}.

perfection of man, whereas the others are animal pleasures, i.e. animals can be as good at them as man. The 'goods' and different kinds of happiness are addressed to the kind of pleasures they satisfy, e.g. the goods which satisfy our bodily pleasures are not our ultimate goal or the ends (supposed ends) of our actions. So are the kinds of happiness which give us bodily satisfaction and lag behind in giving us mental satisfaction; they should not be our ends or consequences of our actions, as far as Miskawayh is concerned.

Man's happiness should be directed towards his perfection and towards the qualities which add up to his perfection. These could be taken to include universal Islamic principles extracted from the Sharī^c, e.g. justice, rational benevolence, altruistic feelings, etc., and subordinate particular principles, which cannot be dispensed with in daily practice, e.g. 'keep promises', 'don't lie', 'don't steal', etc.

His social attitude is always directed towards a 'virtuous city' (Madīna Fāḍila) which includes virtuous citizens. In fact, there wouldn't have been any virtuous city or virtuous citizens if there wasn't a social life. Virtue cannot be viable unless it goes beyond the self to the other. Companionableness is the backbone of the virtuous city. Miskawayh owes his universal social qualities to the sense of Islamic reason which permeates his utilitarian tendency.

As to the question of how a viable comparison can be drawn between a medieval Muslim philosopher and three modern philosophers, it can be answered that, the encyclopaedic learning of his time, made it easy for him to acquire the expected standard of learning available then. This broad background encourages Miskawayh to write fluently about miscellaneous subjects and to support his philosophical arguments with biological, cosmological as well as geographical evidences. The comparison, however, is a combination of different elements in the philosophy of Miskawayh. It has been divided into three different aspects in the thesis, namely:

- (a) the rational aspect of his philosophy which is compared with Hume's utilitarian trend as a way of moral reasoning.

What actually characterizes this trend of Hume's is the minimal role of reason in the drawing of the map of our moral conduct. Morality depends on our passions and sentiments. It has been shown that Miskawayh's use of reason is not uniform; there are times when he would depend on the usefulness of moral behaviour as a measurement of the rightness or wrongness of actions, e.g. a doctor who does a particular action for professional reasons and does a different action for humanitarian reasons would be judged as to be right or wrong according to the actions which conform with his essence as a man, i.e. in this case, the action which would be taken to represent human qualities is the right action, i.e. the action done on humanitarian grounds. The reason why this action is right and not the other, is the usefulness of the situation to the production of the greatest happiness.

Both Hume and Miskawayh depend on human nature as a criterion of moral approbation and disapprobation. Hume takes moral approbation to depend wholly on human sentiments and passions, whereas Miskawayh thinks that reason is important to the development of moral approbation. Reason, to Miskawayh, means an amalgamation of rational Platonism and intellectual Aristotelianism.

- (b) Added to the above is the religious aspect of morality, which provides room for a comparison between the religious aspect of Miskawayh and the religious utilitarianism of Paley.

It has been found that both philosophers adhere to the ethico-religious approach to morality; and that they both opt for reconciliation of reason and revelation.

- (c) The religious reconciliation leads to the social aspect of utility, without which there wouldn't have been any virtue or morality.

This usefulness ensues from the social utility of the actions. This also leads back to the essence of man. It is the common nature of man through different times and generations. This is why the comparison between Mill and Miskawayh shared a sound similarity between the two philosophers. They both rely on Rational Benevolence as a

basis for universal altruism. In the case of Miskawayh he derives some of his arguments for universality from Islamic Law. He has been supported in this claim by Mill, who endorses retributive Jewish-Mohammedan Law, as he names it, which call for re-payment in kind, e.g. eye for an eye.

It has also been shown that Mill has room in his philosophy for a revealed knowledge and practical religious morality.

This is also true about the philosophy of Miskawayh, which is based on reconciliation between reason and revelation. Mill argues that revealed moral conduct would fulfil the requirement of utility in a supreme degree. This can be understood as a concession made by Mill to Christian morality, i.e. in a utilitarian system, religious values enjoy a high status, because they satisfy the utilitarian end. It has also been shown that justice plays a great role in supporting universal principles, i.e. it supplies universal laws which pertain to human nature and, at the same time, adds some auxillary, subordinate principles and laws that apply to daily moral practice.

It is hoped that by establishing the evidence that there is a utilitarian tendency in the philosophy of Miskawayh, it would also be shown that Muslim philosophy like Western philosophy, is a human endeavour and, as such, it belongs to human knowledge at large, i.e. it is not merely restricted to classical texts.

APPENDIX

KITĀB AL-SA^CĀDA LI-IBN-MISKAWAYH
THE BOOK OF HAPPINESS IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY
BY IBN MISKAWAYH

1. Praise be to God Who bestows His bounties on the creatures and has distinguished His friends with a special share of grace. I praise Him for the superabundance of His wisdom and I ask Him to make me thankful for His favours. Blessings be upon His Prophet and his offspring.

Now, it is incumbent on a person who has been distinguished by God with great determination and has been endowed with sound deliberation and who has given himself true precedence in every virtue and who through his sound judgement has participated in every truth, to aspire to what his teacher,¹ may God help him in the attainment of truth and make the achievement of goals easier for him, has aspired to, so that he can ascend by degrees to the highest pinnacle of wisdom and obtain the sweetest of its fruits.

Since I knew his aspiration for the real sciences and his natural disposition towards wisdom, I have

1. Abū Ḥayyān mentioned the fact that Ibn Miskawayh had an argument with Abū al-Faḍl Ibn al-Amīd and his son, Abū al-Faḥ, about the similarity between nature and arts which is part of the subject matter of this book. This is why it is possible that by 'his teacher' here he means Ibn al-Amīd Abū al-Faḍl, the litterateur, who also has connections and arguments with logicians and philosophers. (al-Tawḥīdī, Abū Ḥayyān, al-Imtā^C wa-al-Mu'ānasa, Part 2, p.39.)

have continued to go along with him in one thing after another of those matters of wisdom which he used to require as time and circumstances allowed until the purpose of a wise man, a purpose supported by his own efforts and also by the aim of a philosopher, an aim which he endeavours to achieve by effort, came upon me.

He asked me about the different kinds of happiness which occur to people according to their different grades, what they are and how much they differ in order that his resolution should be directed towards the uppermost of them and his efforts aimed towards the farthest.

2. I promised him that I would write this down in a memorandum which would be available to him at any time.

In order, also, that he might observe (having read it) the great things which they were ambitious to achieve and which they elevated their souls to reach. And I shall begin that with the help of God.

I will mention the happiness which is applicable to man, what it is and how it is, and what the happiness is, which is common to all people qua people; what part of it is achieved by those who make efforts of various kinds; whether these kinds of happiness are different or the same; whether they are piled one on top of the other till we ascend to the one of the highest grade; whether they are ascending to one on top and what this one is. Is there any other happiness beyond this

which Man should not expect to achieve and should have no craving for? Or do all kinds of happiness terminate at this end so that we stop there like the stopping of the finite after which there is no (further) goal? Is this the great (happiness) for which Man with all his dignity and high worth has been prepared for? Can it be attained without effort and exertion or without practical knowledge (ṣinā^ca)¹ and experience, without taking the road followed by wise men who took to it and incited wise men to follow suit? Is it possible to summarize what they elaborated and wrote on voluminously?

If that is impossible, is Man's lifespan sufficient for attaining this purpose through practical knowledge (ṣinā^ca)? Do people differ in what they acquire of it?

3. Is it close to some of them and distant for others? And if they do differ, how long does it take the cleverest of them to learn it when some of his work distracts him and he devotes attention to it? What is the quality (sifa) of this clever man during this prescribed period? And how many books are essential? And what art is indispensable? And what is the shortest way to the end which he could attain with the utmost reflection?

Before we start talking about this great happi-

1. Ṣinā^ca as used in this text refers to practical wisdom and practical wisdom, according to Aristotle, is deliberation about what is good and expedient for man. (Aristotle, N.E., Bk.VI:Ch.4, 1140^{a25-30}.) It also means science.

ness we shall make some introductory remarks about it... this is similar to nature, and this is a view which is correct by analogy and is free from distortion. It is obvious if we contemplate all tools used in crafts that almost every one of them is derived from what is naturally similar to it. It is not possible that there should be a craft tool which has no purpose or benefit. Moreover, it is not possible that one craft tool should take the place of another so that it performs its purpose and its total function (kamāl) completely and truly. Thus, with regard to the saw, although we can use it for some of the work done by the adze, it is not possible that it will perform everything that the adze can do completely.

Likewise are all instruments; each has its own total function (kamāl) and purpose, by which it becomes complete. Excellence will be attributed to it and it will be truly praised, if it is found with a total function and if that purpose, for which it exists and was made, can be realized by it. If the craft, which has been preceded by nature, has this attribute, then it will be most appropriate that nature, which is superior and powerful, will also have this attribute, and it is necessary that it does not do anything vainly or have an instrument without a purpose and a total function which pertains to it; or that no part of it would take the place of another and perform its action perfectly, because the first (tool) will then be useless and vain. Some of this wisdom from nature is considered a clear exposition for him who contemplates the organs of the body, because all organs of the body are its natural instruments; for it performs with every one of them a special function, which cannot be completed or fully effected by another.

Thus, the heart which is the source of motion, produces heat for it, which is the cause of life. Pulsating veins stem from the heart, along which the power of the heart flows to other parts of the body, and the life of the whole body is thus effected.

Likewise is the brain, for the nerves which stem from the brain perform the same function as the arteries to the heart, in that they connect the brain to the rest of the body. They generate sense and voluntary motion. Likewise are all parts of the body and the other organs, like the stomach, spleen, gall-bladder and intestines. Likewise are all the other visible tools (i.e. organs of the body), despite their large number. None of them can be thought to be dispensable, nor does it exist without a perfect (function) (tamām) which is peculiar to it. Whoever looks into the book Manāfi^C al-A^Cdā'¹ will come to know great wisdom and will realise much of what I have just referred to here.

5. If nature, which comes first, is in this condition the soul is similar to it. Then how much more appropriate it is that the soul should be more worthy of the position and more deserving of wisdom. That is because the soul uses animals of different kinds as instruments and it prepares every one of them with a special function which no other animal can perform.

1. Manāfi^C al-A^Cdā' (the uses of the organs) is written by Aristotle and it is called De Partibus Animalium (On the Parts of Animals). (See McKeon, R., Introduction to Aristotle, pp.253-266).

Just as an adze cannot do the work of a saw as the example we mentioned before. Since we have presented what we intend to present in the introduction, we will repeat it by saying: If it becomes clear to us that every existent has a perfection which pertains to it and an end for which it has been created, then it is incumbent on Man who is the most honourable creature in this transient world to be more worthy of this (attribute)¹ and to have his own perfection, completion and purpose for which he has been created. When philosophers pondered over the end of Man and the perfection for which he has been created, they found that he has two perfections, a short-term perfection and a long-term perfection. A likeness taken from the craftsmen's tools is the hammer whose short-term perfection is to flatten solid bodies and whose long-term perfection is to make a ring. An example also from the natural tools is the stomach whose short-term perfection is to contain food, digest it and prepare it for nutrition and whose long-term perfection is to compensate for the consumption of the body so that it will continue surviving.

6. Likewise is Man; his short-term perfection is to perform actions thoughtfully and deliberately and to arrange them as reason dictates. As to his long-term perfection, we shall make it clear in our forthcoming elucidation.

When philosophers pondered over the power of deliberation and discrimination they found that they

1. Reading *أدب* instead of *أدب* .

originate from a power higher than them and then follow continuously one after another until they come to an end beyond which there is no end. It is known that if there were an end for every end there would be an infinite number of ends and the existence of the infinite in this world is impossible. When they reached the end of ends and they made sure that there was no way beyond, they stopped there and desisted from research and they knew that the ends below it were arranged before it just like steps and stairs. When they pondered over the end of Man and his short-term perfection they found that people differ and they also saw that, despite their differences, people do not doubt the fact that they have an end but they differ as to what end it is. Every one of them has set an end to himself which he endeavours to achieve and he calls it his happiness, like the one who seeks pleasure or wealth or health or dominance or knowledge. They come to differ because they did not observe the long-term perfection, I mean ultimate happiness. If they knew it and made it their objective they would have directed the other ends towards it as the goldsmith does, for

7. when he knows the ultimate perfection of the hammer, I mean making a crown or a ring or a bracelet, he chooses the direct path and flattens the solid body to that end. Some of the things which we have just enumerated could be called happiness metaphorically and some are real happiness and some are thought to be happiness and are not happiness at all. This is because those ends which are common to Man and animals are not happiness to us (because)¹ they are not our end and perfection as human beings qua human beings. As to those ends which pertain to Man qua Man, they could be called happiness but this meaning is common to all people. Some of these kinds of

1. Reading لا تتها and not لا بها .

happiness which pertain to Man are common to all people, as we have said, and they all share in it, some pertain to individual men and some pertain to a special group (khāṣṣ); it is that to which all kinds of happiness ascend and there they all stop because all kinds of happiness exist for it and are because of it. It is the final purpose and the ultimate perfection.

By the will and help of God, I will illustrate these divisions (between different ends). As to that which is common to all men and all animals, it is eating, drinking and the different bodily comforts, I mean (by those comforts) the elimination by the body of superfluities and the like.

This is what people call the pleasant. Many
8. people direct their goals to that end. Until I illustrate clearly that this is not happiness and nor is it the perfection of Man or the end for which he has been created, I will say of it in convincing clear words that animals have a share in these things equal to Man's share; indeed, their appetites to eat, drink and copulate are greater and more constant than Man's appetites, and they are stronger (than men) in them. Then ignorant people who are more beast-like are stronger in this respect than virtuous people. It is obvious then that this is not the ultimate end of Man nor his perfection as a human being. As to common happiness for Man qua Man, it is as we mentioned before, the performance of actions according to deliberation and discrimination. According to what reason dictates, this meaning is a happiness which is accessible to every man. Anyone can partake of it and have a share in it as much as his grade of humanity allows and according to the amount of his appreciat-

ion of beauty and ugliness and his acquisition of grades of virtues and vices and the degrees of praiseworthiness and blameworthiness. This is the situation where it can be said X is more human than Y. Every nation and every generation have a proportion of this happiness in which they share, even if they differ as to the part of happiness they practise. He who falls short of this level completely and has no share of it, should not be called a human being except in the way in which we call a por-
9. trait a man by way of simile on account of the drawing alone. This meaning is given to all people by (that) first natural disposition and they differ as to how they use it. As to the happiness which pertains to every individual, it only pertains to a man of learning or a man of practical knowledge and they differ in the acquisition of happiness according to their different grades in theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge and according to the conditions in which they perform their actions as judgement and discrimination dictate. The happiness of the wealthy person and the happiness of the poor person, even if they differ as to their different circumstances, both agree in the order of actions. The happiness of the wealthy person is manifested in the distribution of money and spending it properly, I mean he should use it where it is necessary and as it is necessary and with whom it is necessary. The happiness of the poor man is manifested in patience and perseverance in the manner and condition in which it is appropriate and with whom it is appropriate.

Likewise are the kinds of happiness which pertain to men of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge, and the happiness of the skilful doctor is not like the happiness of an excellent clerk (kātib). The happiness of him who knows many arts is not the same as

- the happiness of him who knows only one art. I mean even if they discipline their actions in the same manner they still differ as to the different subjects they are tackling. After all, every one of them has actions which pertain to him as a man of a theoretical knowledge or a practical knowledge and actions which pertain to him as a human being. He will never obtain the happiness which
10. pertains to him unless he obtains the happiness which is common to himself and others. For example, if a doctor performs a good action as a doctor and if he performs otherwise as a human being, that part of happiness which occurs to him as a doctor will be erased by that which he does as a human being, and even if it is not erased completely, there will remain only a small part of it according to measurable quality; i.e., we measure his humanity in relation to his medicine and happiness can be ascribed to him according to the result of the measurement. Likewise we can measure all kinds of happiness according to each theoretical knowledge and each practical knowledge. As to the kinds of miseries which contrast with these kinds of happiness, we forbear to mention them because they can be known from their opposites as is shown in logic, that contradictions are known together in the same condition, and every person should be guided in accordance to his class and grade to the happiness that pertains to him in the highest and best way possible that he could afford. This is a position which pertains to men (who perform) divine policies and their deputies and it is found in divine legislation. Philosophers wrote voluminously on it also. Those who need further information may get it from their books because what we have referred to here is enough. If there were not many and different kinds of happiness the truly happy one would have been a single individual, the one who knows all the parts of philosophy and understands
11. all practical sciences has an abundant share of all

wisdom, if this were the case the existence of other people would have been a triviality, without an end or perfection. People would have been miserable and there would have been no need for praise (and blame)¹ prayers and rebukes would have been ruled out, training and management would have been nullified. This is contrary to what has been stated and established by scholars and witnessed and perfected by minds.

It has been made clear that people's kinds of happiness are many and exist differently in accordance with (their) many interests. As to ultimate happiness we shall mention it after showing that none of these kinds of happiness is the perfection or the end. This is because they are of two sorts, one is set up horizontally and one is set up vertically. Let us take as an example of this form the professions because they are clearer and more obvious. As for those which are set up horizontally, they are the ones which are thought not to be arranged one under the other, such as commerce, carpentry, dying and weaving and the like. They are as if set up on a flat surface and they are acquired from different principles and they end up with different purposes. As to those which are set up vertically, they are the ones that are arranged one under the other such as the profession of saddle-making which is ordered below the profession of knighthood and the profession of knighthood is ordered below the profession of war and the profession of war is ordered below the profession of kingship and the profession of kingship is ordered below the profession of divine legislation. I mean that

1. Reading **الذم** instead of **ويلزم**

divine legislation secures for people the practices which organize their affairs and lead them towards their happiness as we have mentioned before.

12. Some (of these professions) are dominant and some are subordinate. Now we shall go back to (the point) where we digressed and say: When some philosophers saw the difference among people in their ends, some people thinking that their end is pleasure and striving toward it with all their actions, some thinking that their end is wealth and prosperity, others thinking that it is health and safety and others that it is other things similar to these, they (the philosophers) thought about them and then (found) that the exponents of those which were set up horizontally differ about them. This is because those of them who believe in pleasure or wealth or dignity, when they have found satisfaction and have achieved their aim, alter their opinion. When the seeker after pleasure has satisfied his pleasure and after that is bent on more of what he supposed was happiness, it becomes great misery and abundant evil for him. Happiness is also called misery, because if a man (living a life) of luxury catches a disease, he will come to think of happiness in terms of health. And if a healthy man has been humiliated he will come to think of happiness in terms of dignity. It is known that happiness is dignity and it is also known that dignity is immutable and does not change, and a man of dignity will not change and become miserable by that by which he became happy. These things might cause destruction sooner or later to those who have them, like the person who dies because of his wealth or because of his search for dignity and authority and irresponsible indulgence in
13. pleasure. As for those which were set up vertically it is known that the higher of them is better than the

lower, (while at the same time) serving what is above it because it is required for the sake of it and its cause, for example, money which is an instrument for attaining one's needs, is only required for the health of the body and the health of the body is only required so that one may attain the ultimate happiness or (lesser degrees) of happiness below it. This is why health for its own sake is ruled out.

Aristotle organized genera of happiness as follows:¹

- (1) Happiness of the soul
- (2) Happiness of the body
- (3) Happiness outside the body and in the surroundings of the body.

As to the happiness of the soul, it is the acquirement of sciences and knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom is the best of the three because it is desired for its own sake not for any other purpose.

As to the happiness of the body, it is something like beauty, good health and sound temperament. These are desired for themselves but they may be desired for some other purpose, because by them the actions and virtues of the soul can be completed.

1. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.X:Ch.7, 1177^a-1178^{a1-5}.

As to the happiness which is outside the body, it is something like intelligent children, friends, wealth, nobility and various kinds of dignity. (This was)¹ made clear in the book of Ethics (Nicomachean Ethics).²

Happiness which is outside the body is incomplete, but happiness of the soul is perfect and complete. Man may obtain the two kinds of happiness, the one which is outside the body and happiness of the body by luck. But he cannot attain the complete happiness without hard work and exertion of effort. This is because the classification and detail of these (genera of) happiness is in a necessary order and acquiring them
14. afterward, is not possible without long reflection, much discrimination and constant practice. As for the ultimate happiness, it cannot be attained by everyone, nor does everyone who seeks it achieve it. This is because the employment of these kinds of happiness and reflecting on which of them is a servant by which their chief can be reached and ascending in them by degrees until the highest of them is reached is something which is only attained by a very small number of individuals. When it happens to the odd individual, through his eagerness and his hard work and his sound judgement and his intelligence, that he has ample means and has leisure time and many other means which can rarely be acquired simulataneously, such a man who has reached this grade from our predecessors had pointed it out and led wise men and students of wisdom to it. And those who obtained a greater amount than what their predecessors have mentioned have also pointed out the additional portion

1. ذك (This was) is missing in the text.

2. C.f. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.I: Ch.4, 1095^{a15-30}.

which they found. Finally a great deal of it has been assembled which is of great importance.

Aristotle is the first one to set up the final end as an ultimate purpose and he initiated a clear path to it, he made the attainment of the final end a practical science to be learnt and applied gradually.¹

We shall mention this practical science and how he taught it and the fact that there is no path to acquiring ultimate happiness in a short way when we complete this chapter if God wishes.

15. As the fact is that human happiness is completed according to judgement and that things which are distinguished by intellect are different, as we pointed out before, the happiest of men must be the one who has attained the highest degree of it, and has perceived its end beyond which there is no end, by whatever way it is approached.

The end of ends cannot be reached until the grades which are below have been passed as we showed before. This is why the best deliberation is that which leads to the best object of deliberation. And the best object of deliberation is the one that does not need another deliberation on another object of deliberation and at no time leads to anything other than it but is desired for itself and never for anything else. When

1. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.VI: Ch.12, 1144^{a30-35}.

discernment and discrimination come to an end, ultimate happiness occurs. The sign of the one who reaches this grade is that he is always active, optimistic, strong in hope, steadfast, not disturbed or concerned about worldly affairs except in a very small degree if compared with the conditions of other people.

Externally, he conforms with other people and treats them as (equals)¹ but internally he is quite different and is cheerful and happy through his own soul and not through other things. This state is inseparable from him and it does not change, because people's joy exists for them for the most part as an accident and from the outside. When the thing giving joy disappears or changes, it becomes despondency and sorrow. For example, one who is joyful because of wealth or a loved one or attaining one of the worldly pleasures or one who is pleased with sons or power etc., etc. - all these come from sources external to the body and are liable to damage, changeable with changing circumstances which are inevitably changing because they are from the world of generation and corruption and subject to its laws of change.

The happy man whom we described and whose state we have mentioned is happy in himself because he sees things which do not change nor do they alter ever not is this possible for them. He sees all that he sees with the eye of a person who does not make mistakes or errors and does not accept corruption and he is certain that he is moving from one (aspect) of his exist-

1. Reading *يعاد بهم* instead of *يعاد لهم*.

ence¹ to enter the other most perfect (aspect) of his existence. He is like a person treading a route to a country which he knows and loves with his soul and whenever he complete a day's journey towards it or comes a stage closer to it, he becomes more active, more confident and more happy. This state of confidence and certainty does not occur by narration without involvement (mu^cāyana) and nor is it complete by accounts without personal witnessing and the soul only relies on it after acquisition of certainty.

Those who reach it are of different classes, and similar to that is the person who sees with his physical eye, for people differ in their vision with this eye. There are some who can see distant objects clearly and there are some who cannot see things close up, except as one sees something behind a veil. The difference between these two states is that the longer the sensory
17. eye, it prolongs its gaze and continues its scrutiny of perceptible things, the more it becomes tired and weak. This other eye is the opposite, since it grows stronger by exertion and grows by prolonged use in clarity and quickness of perception, and continues to grow in sharpness of sight until it perceives that which it thought was imperceptible and inconceivable.

Returning to our previous discourse on happiness, we say that common human happiness which we mentioned before are given to us and inborn in us and they are the powers by which we distinguish good and bad actions and by which every one of us is able to acquire a

1. wāḥid wujūdih: as such this has no meaning, but the context seems to indicate this meaning.

good character if he does not have one.

If, however, he has a bad character they will enable him to change it to the opposite voluntarily. Then he must become accustomed to it and repeat actions appropriate to it until this becomes (as if) a natural character (actions which pertain to the opposite character, i.e. the good one). This is the first degree which must be observed and striven towards and efforts must be made towards its acquisition as we have explained previously that man becomes more humane by this. If we examine (the states of) most people we find that these are of two categories:

- (1) The first one is that whose doer is not to be blamed or praised;
- (2) The second one is that whose doer is to be blamed or praised.

We are not concerned with those (states of) happiness whose doer will not be blamed or praised and we will not call it happiness. Let us forget then about this category.

18. As to the other category whose doer will be blamed or praised, we endeavour to acquire the praiseworthy one and call it happiness.

These states (in this last category) can be divided into three parts, namely:

- (1) Actions
- (2) Accidents and
- (3) Rational Distinctions.

By accidents I mean accidents of the soul such as: appetite, anger, pleasure, joviality and mercy and the like.

As for actions, man is praised if they are good and is blamed if they are bad.

As for accidents, they will be praised if they occur appropriately and will be blamed if they occur unappropriately.

As to rational distinction it will be praised if it is good and will be blamed if it is bad. The badness of rational distinction can be caused by one of two things:

Either (1) Not to be able to distinguish what one receives;
or (2) to have false belief about things.

The goodness of distinction also can be caused by one of two factors:

Either (1) To be able to distinguish what one receives
or (2) to acquire (knowledge of) the reality of things and to have a true belief in them.

It is necessary according to this (advice)¹ that if we are really keen about happiness and if we are to go further to its highest degree that we should ponder

1. Reading النصيحة instead of الفبيحة .

over this first step and that our actions should be good and our accidents should be appropriate and that our distinction should be good and sound.

We know that these three states may occur to a man by luck without efforts or striving and that he may acquire them without deliberate choice but we do not
19. call it complete happiness since happiness can only be acquired by Man's own choice and personal endeavour. He may choose them but in some things and at some times, and this again cannot be called happiness because happiness will not occur to Man unless he chooses it for its own sake and not for any other things. I mean he should prefer good actions because they are good, not for the reason that he wanted to be praised or to benefit from doing them or for any other reason. Likewise he should prefer with regard to accidents that they should occur for him as appropriate and with regard to rational distinction that it should be good throughout his life.

Man will not be able to acquire these states with these conditions unless he is in a constant mood, which either cannot be eradicated or is very difficult to eradicate. This mood in relation to rational distinction is called 'mental power', or in relation to accidents it is called 'character', while as to actions they should originate from these two (aspects of the constant mood). Aristotle has clarified this and touched upon it.¹ As for the excellence of mind and the power of distinction, he acquires them from logic which is a practical science by which man, when he has grasped it, knows the

1. Aristotle, N.E., Bk.VI: Ch.4, 1139^{b11}-Ch.13, 1145^{a11}.

grades of arguments and the correction of ideas concerning every existent as it should be and which cannot be otherwise. We shall describe them later.

As to accidents of the soul he acquires them from Ethics in which we shall clarify how man acquires good character in whatever he thinks of until there does not occur to him anything but the good, beautiful and praiseworthy actions and until it becomes an attitude and (similar to a) natural disposition in all matters.

20. It has been made clear there that this is possible and not impossible as some people have presumed. If it is not possible we would not be able to correct children and youths. The acquisition of these two, i.e. mental power for the correction of distinction and the virtuous attitude, which is (similar) to the natural disposition from which actions originate appropriately, is (the acquisition of) the two parts of wisdom. This is why the philosopher divided philosophy into two parts, theoretical and practical, neither of which can be used instead of the other for the acquisition of happiness. He who gains strength in both of them is the complete happy man and the virtuous philosopher. And the one who is stronger in one of them and weaker in the other, his strength and weakness can be classified as either theoretically strong and practically weak or practically strong and theoretically weak. The reason for weak practice after strong theoretical knowledge is weak determination. (By weak determination) I mean that since he knows instinctively or by rational distinction that a particular pleasure will be followed by a particular harm, whether illness or blame by others or a bad consequence, he does not refrain from it.

The cause of the weakness of determination is the lack of ethical training; concerning this, we have mentioned that books have been compiled which provide man with (the knowledge of) a virtuous faculty and disposition, man acquires a faculty and virtuous attitude by repeating praiseworthy actions and making them habitual so that they became natural.

As to the other aspect (of wisdom) in which the practical part is strong and theoretical is weak, it will not be experienced except by those who listen
21. to philosophers and believe in their statements and imitate their good actions, taking them in good faith even though they cannot verify their validity by reflection and then to endeavour (to implement them). This is the rank of the unquestioning believer. Men like them will be much happier than the first group.

Their example is like that of someone who accepts what the physician prescribes and what he forbids and consequently he gets well and becomes healthy. And the example of the first group is like a knowledgeable physician who does not use his knowledge in curing himself and so he gets ill and his knowledge turns out to be useless to him.

Those who are in this rank are called slaves by nature because he who is not able to curb his desires in the way that distinction makes necessary is a slave by nature even if he is free by divine law. On the con-

trary, he who is able to (curb)¹ his desires is free by nature even if he is a slave by divine law. As to the person who follows his desires and who does not know the harm that ensues after satisfaction of desires, this sort of person is not expected to practise good actions and he cannot stop doing bad actions easily. This person should definitely be punished as it is stated in the divine laws. The person who is weak in both respects is a beastly man whose portion of humanity is considered in proportion to his weak faculties (i.e. the weaker the faculties the lesser is his portion of humanity).

It has become clear that the perfectly happy philosopher is the one who has a strong mentality and sound discernment and who is able to know the realities of things in all existents. He also has strong determination to implement his knowledge and then he continues in the same line in these two things, i.e. knowledge and practice. It has become clear from the above that the theoretical part should precede the practical part be-
22. cause it is by excellence and power of distinction that he obtains the correctness in everything which he wants to know.

Since knowledge can be divided into two kinds:

- (1) That which is known but not practised and
- (2) That which is known and practised,

the practical sciences likewise are classified into two accordingly. I mean by that which is known and not practised something like the knowledge that God Almighty is one, and that He is eternal and the creator of the world. An example of that which is known and practised is good conduct in transactions and skill in professions and generally actions which are done from deliberation

1. Reading *قهر* instead of *قهر*

and frequent practice. Books have been written on these two sciences to explicate what they are and to facilitate their acquisition. Since in these two parts there is what is aimed at in itself and desired for its own sake and there is what is useful for what is desired in itself, the science is divided again into two other parts.

The science whose end is directed towards knowledge only is intended for the perception of truth, and true belief and absolute certainty; this is preferred for its own sake, not for anything else. Likewise is the science which is aimed at for good practice and virtuous character. These together are, as we have said, the two parts of wisdom. Each of them is called wisdom rightly and truly. As to the other sciences which are useful in relation to these two parts (of wisdom), they could be called wisdom metaphorically but in reality they are not. They are sciences which demand deliberation and frequent practice so that skill in it may become manifest.

23. Wise men call these (the sciences which are not part of wisdom) cleverness and they do not call it wisdom. These are like the professions which lead to wealth, pleasure or leadership.

He who wants to perfect his humanity and attain the thing for which Man is created, to perfect himself and to partake with philosophers in that which they favoured and directed their efforts towards it; he should acquire these two sciences. I mean the two parts of wisdom, the theoretical and the practical, so that he can get to know the reality of things by the theoretical part and good deeds by the practical part.

As to the arrangement of these two sciences and how to practise them to achieve the two above-mentioned ends, (the two ends being the reality of things and good deeds as mentioned earlier), it is according to what Aristotle, the philosopher put forward.¹ He is the one who organised wisdom systematically, classified it and laid down a method which can be followed from beginning to end, as Paul mentioned in his letter to Anūshirwān² saying that wisdom before this philosopher was dispersed like all other useful things which have been created by God and God makes their utility dependent on Man's nature and the power He has given him to obtain these (useful things). Like medicines which are scattered in different countries and mountains, which if they are collected and compounded, will produce useful medicine.

Likewise Aristotle collected what was scattered of wisdom and he classified each thing in its similar form and located it in its proper place and he extracted from this a perfect medicine to cure the souls from the
24. illnesses of ignorance. Part of this classification was that he looked into the two parts of wisdom, the theoretical and the practical and he found that the theoretical part can be either in things which are material or in things which are immaterial. Each of these groups is also divided into two, since some of those which are material are subject to generation and corruption and some are not and some immaterial things are derived from

1. Aristotle, *N.E.*, Bk.VI: Ch.4, 4, 1139^{b11} - Ch.13, 1145^{a11}.

2. Paul is a Persian philosopher and logician. He wrote a book on the logic of Aristotle in Syriac and Anūshirwān Kisrā is a Persian sage who wrote short moral admonitions in Persian.

(C.f. ^cIzzat, ^cAbd al-^cAziz, *Miskawayh*, *op.cit.*, pp.205f and p.361.)

(See also Miskawayh, *Jawāidān Khird*, *op.cit.*, pp.45, 49, 61, 182).

material things but exist only in fantasy and do not have an existence outside it. Some other immaterial things are not derived from material things but they have an existence of their own outside fantasy. These are the four primary divisions of the theoretical part (of wisdom).

Material things have some (properties) which are common to them all and some (properties) which pertain to some of them only. Some of these (properties) pertain to eternal things and some pertain to transient things. Some of the (properties) which pertain to transient things are common to all of them and some pertain to some of them.

What pertains to some of these (transient) things includes those which pertain to things on the earth and some of them pertain to things inside the earth. What pertains to things inside the earth includes things which pertain to entities which do not have souls and things which pertain to entities which have souls. The things which have souls include properties which have senses and properties which do not have senses.

25. Aristotle has written a book on each of these divisions. His books contain all that he has written about these matters perceptually and conceptually and nothing escaped him.

As his attention was directed to the correction of volition regarding all these matters and to give certainty and satisfactory arrangements regarding them

all and to safeguard against mistakes of error concerning intelligibles, he was forced to research into the grades of arguments and look into things regarding which he could not make mistakes and felt certain that he would not fall into falsity and think it truth and think truth falsity. What are the grades of these things? He composed a science and laws for these things by which the grades of these things and their degrees of certainty and other (stages) can be known, so that man can tread the path of correctness in everything which he desires, so that his approach to wisdom may be different from that of the holders of other doctrines in (their) imagination and fancies. These people committed mistakes unwittingly or perhaps wittingly moving from one idea to another, never feeling sure that the false idea which occurred to them the first time may not occur to them the second time. They are always mistaken or doubtful and perplexed. If man knows the things about which he may make mistakes, he will guard against them and he will be sure of the things in which he has found truth and has not made a mistake.

If it seems to him that he has overlooked something, he will go back to the laws of the science and know the place where he has made the error immediately
26. and correct it easily. He can correct that view for himself and for others as well and thus he changes the other's idea and finally exposes it to him. This is the science of logic. The closest example I can find in other sciences is the science of metrics and the science of grammar, each of which is similar to logic in one aspect. This is because there are verses metres of poetry which are correct and someone who is not an expert may make a mistake and think that they are faulty or may think that faulty verses are sound, and if he goes back

to the rule of the science he will know the place of the doubtful (word) and he will be able to correct it as it should be. He will then establish the place of error, if there is one, and will mend what he has missed (before). A science which is also related to logic in another way is the science of grammar because the relation of the science of grammar to words is like the relation of the science of logic to meanings. As grammar directs the tongue towards correct language and gives the laws by which desinential inflection is known, likewise logic directs the mind towards the corrections of the meanings and gives the laws whereby truth can be recognised. Although the grammarian's purpose is to correct words, he also looks into meanings to correct meanings by it. The grammarian looks into words themselves in the first place and then he looks into meanings accidentally and in the second place. The logician on the other hand looks into meanings themselves in the first place and then he looks into words accidentally and in the second place; now the aim of the philosopher (Aristotle) in the

27. science of logic becomes clear.

The one who is ignorant of this science will necessarily be unable to check the correctness of him who is correct, how he is correct and in what way he is correct, neither will he be able to check the negligence of he who is negligent or makes mistakes, how and where he is negligent or makes a mistake.

He will be perplexed as to different opinions and he will declare some of these opinions correct without confidence and declare some of them false without understanding and will suspend judgement towards some of them, not knowing how to judge. He will not be sure

that what he declares correct today will not be affected tomorrow by something which will make him rescind it and doubt it, or what he declares false may not turn out to be true at another time. He regards what he holds to be true as possibly false, and what he holds to be false as possibly true and he may finally come to a view contrary to both of these positions either because of a personal impression emerging from his first belief or because of someone else's opinion.

And when someone (puts forward) an argument and presents it through his skill (in argument) who claims perfection in knowledge and culture and he does not have any means to test him, he can either have good faith in him and accept him or suspect him and reject him. In both cases, he is bound to receive some impressions which makes him think that something is true and some other thing is false. Logic will show these positions to him, confirm the correct to him and show him why it is correct and show the false to be false and why it is false. We are then forced to verify our concepts by logical laws which eradicate the mistakes surrounding us and correct the words which refer by agreement to these concepts in order that other people may not fall into the same mistakes. Both of these are called the science of logic, but the one is studied for itself and the other accidentally as we have shown. When Aristotle pondered over the grades of arguments which convince the mind (nafs) and wanted to arrange them and to make a scientific law for them in order to arrive at the reality of things by them, he divided them as he divided the sciences which we have explained before. He found that

28.

1. Reading عرفى instead of غرضى.

the kinds of syllogisms and propositions which we need to correct an idea or to reach a desired fact either by ourselves or through other people are divided into three:

- (1) Absolutely true and certain without any doubt,
- (2) Absolutely false and doubtful,
- (3) Partly true and partly false.

This third class can be divided into three parts:

- (1) Its truth is greater than its falsity.
- (2) Its falsity is greater than its truth.
- (3) Or the two matters are equal.

Thus the total types of syllogisms are five:

- (1) Certain
- (2) Probable
- (3) Fallacious
- (4) Plausible
- (5) Imaginary.

29. He (Aristotle) has written a book on each of the five divisions and a science which deals with this method by laws by which no-one can deviate from the essence of that which is desired and no-one can go back from it and it cannot be subject to suspicion or doubt, and he called it Apodictics (Kitāb al-Burhān) (Analytica Posteriora).

As for the syllogism which is fallacious, it is the one in which we imagine things to be in a form in which they are not in reality. An example of this is what happens to the eye when it perceives, for what occurs to the soul vis-a-vis the intelligible on perception is what occurs to the eye vis-a-vis the sensible on perception. One may imagine something fallaciously and then proceed to action on the basis of that imagination and the actions will be bad and ugly. He (Aristotle)

composed a book on the different aspects of imaginations, when they occur and how they occur and he called it the Book of the Poets and the Poetical Art (Kitāb al-Shu^carā' wa-al-Şinā^ca al-Shi^criyya) (Poetics) (Poetica).

As to whose truth is greater than its falsity, it is the syllogism which rests on generally accepted premises, not intrinsic and not substantial to the desired conclusion and not essential to the conclusion. Man should seek to produce strong probability either of his own or of others so that he can obtain the desired conclusion even if it is not certain.

Aristotle has written a book on this art and he shows the different aspects of these probabilities and whence and how they are true and whence and how they are false and he called it al-Jadal and the Science of Dialectics (Topics) (Topica).

As to (the syllogism) whose falsity is greater than its truth, it is the one which erroneously supposes the false to be true and the ignorant man to be a knowledgeable one. This mistake occurs in different ways and categories.

He (Aristotle) composed a book in which he shows facets of deceptions, falsities and mistakes, how they occur and whence and he called it the science of sophism, which is deceptive wisdom (hikma mumawwaha) in the Greek language. It is derived from sophia (sūf) which is

deception and deceit. Thus its meaning is deceptive wisdom. Whoever is able to deceive and be deceitful in order to make people believe that he is a philosopher when he is not, is a sophist; there is not, as (some of) those who professed Islam, a man in ancient times called Sophistā who used to repudiate the reality of things and who had followers supporting his creed and they named it after him. This is a baseless assumption, since there was no man in ancient times who was called Sophista and nobody was named after him and no particular people ever supported his particular creed. This is analogous to the science of dialectic (jadāl), for a man is called a dialectician (jadālī) without there being a man called 'Jad-al'.

As to (the syllogism) in which its falsity is equal to its truth it is that by which one attempts to persuade, in any topic, and to make the listener accept what is said to him and believe it in some way or other. This is less than strong probability. He (Aristotle) composed a book in which he showed the different aspects of persuasion, whence they occur and how they occur and he called it the Book of Rhetoric (Kitāb al-Khiṭāba) (Rhetorica).

These are the five books of logic. When Aristotle pondered over syllogism he found that some parts
31. of it are common to all these arts and some of them are particular to each of these arts. Aristotle composed a book on the first general syllogism which is common to these five arts and he called it Analytics (Kitāb al-Qiyās) (Analytica Priora). This book exists in the old translations (in two parts), one called Analytics (Kitāb al-Qiyās) and the other The Book of Analogy (Kitāb al-

al-Burhān) (*Analytica Posteriora*).

The Aristotle looked into syllogism and he found that it is composed of words and meanings. The simplest syllogistic proposition is the one which is compounded of two words and the simplest syllogistic meaning is the one which is compounded of (two propositions). Most of (these syllogisms) are unlimited. The parts of the propositions which are compounded of two words are necessarily single words. Necessarily then, this science is divided into eight parts by way of analysis. When Aristotle tried the division by way of synthesis, he started off with single words which refer to genera of single meanings. Aristotle composed a book on this and he classified these words into ten genera of meanings then he divided each one of them into different species and he called it the Book of Categoriae (Kitāb al-Maḡulāt) which is known as the Book of Categories (Qāṭiqūriyās). Then he wrote a second book in which he mentioned the compound propositions and he called it the (Bārī Irmīr īyās) (*Peri Hermeneias*)¹ (De Interpretatione). Then he wrote a third book, the Kitāb al-Qiyās, which we have mentioned above and he shows in this book the laws of propositions which demonstrate the syllogism, which are common to the five kinds of argument and

32. he called it the (Analytica Priora). Then he wrote a fourth book called Al-Burhān which is the Second Analytica (Analytica Posteriora). He shows in this book the laws of syllogisms which are not mistaken and cannot be mistaken. These are the certain (syllogisms). Then he wrote a fifth book in which he mentioned the syllogistic

1. Hermeneutics.

laws which are derived from generally accepted premises, how questions and answers can be formulated according to this method and he shows in it the laws by which this art is accomplished in the best possible way and he called it Topica (Tūbīqā), which is Kitāb al-Jadal. Then he wrote a sixth book in which he mentions the laws of those matters in which the truth is mistaken and confused, and those things to which the misrepresenter has recourse, and shows the things which reveal their deceptive nature and how we can avoid them, and he called it Sophistica (Sophistica Elenchi) (Sūfistīq), i.e. deceptive wisdom. Then he wrote a seventh book in which he mentions the laws of the things which are convincing by rhetoric and mentioned all the means whereby this art can be attained so that Man will become more perfect and effective and he called it Rhetorica (Rītūrīq).

Then Aristotle wrote an eighth book in which he mentions the laws which govern imaginative words and enumerated all the means by which art can be attained and divided them into their species and categories and he called it Poetica (Fūrīṭīqā), i.e. poetry, so that this science may be perfected in these divisions. His first objective was to obtain demonstration but classification and arrangement necessitated the afore-mentioned division. For the things which are known by way of demonstration are little in comparison with that which is known by the other (kinds of) syllogisms, and it was incumbent on him to organize them and to know their different methods.

Some of the methods are methods of demonstration and some of them defend it and support it. As to the three (books) in the preliminary stages of this science,

they are the ones which lead to it. The other four are the ones which defend it so that it may not be confused with what is not demonstration. The best of these books is Apodictics (Kitāb al-Burhān) (Analytica Posteriora), because it is the first objective and it necessarily falls in the fourth part (i.e. book) as mentioned above, while the remaining books are composed either as introductions and preludes to it or as defences of it.

As to the three books which precede Apodictics they are the introductions and as for the four books which follow it, they protect it, distinguish it and defend it against the methods which might be supposed to lead to the end which it itself leads to. Nevertheless if one aims to be a strong dialectician or a fluent rhetorician or a creative poet, he will move towards what he seeks and acquire one of the books in which the laws of the art have been classified in order that he may attain the highest degree and the uppermost grade in that art. However if one restricts oneself to the four books, that will be enough for him to learn wisdom, together with the books which come after these books. They are the books which we enumerated and explained how the philosopher (Aristotle) divided them. Then one would begin with the books on material things which are on

34. natural matters and leave to the end the books on abstract things from matter because natural things are perceptible and they are closer to us and we are used to them and we know them better. We can ascend from (their knowledge of) them to (the knowledge of) things beyond. Aristotle wrote a book on this art in which he classified things common to all natural objects, those which are undergoing the process of becoming and those which are not undergoing the process of becoming and he called it Al-Samā^c al-Tabī^cī (Physics). He (Aristotle)

also wrote a book on things which are not undergoing the process of becoming and he called it The Book of the Heaven (Kitāb al-Samā') (De Caelo). Then he divided all things which are undergoing the process of becoming. He wrote a book on things which are common to all these and he called it the Book of Generation and Corruption (Kitāb al-Kawn wa-al-Fasād) (De Generatione et Corruptione). Then he wrote a book about things pertaining to earth, those which have souls but do not have senses and he called it the Book of Plants (De Plantis).¹ He then wrote a book on things which have souls and do have senses and he called it the Book of Animals (Kitāb al-Hayawān) (De Partibus Animalium) The History of Animals. When he wanted to ascend from natural objects i.e. material objects to immaterial things he found between these two stages, there are things common to both physics and metaphysics, and he composed his book on the Soul (De Anima) and his book on Sense and Sensible concerning these things. Then he wrote his books on metaphysics which he called after the alphabet and they are the books known as Alif, Bā', etc.² Some of them have been translated into Arabic and some have not been translated. However the books which have been translated into Arabic are adequate and completely sufficient. When Aristotle finished these great works on theoretical wisdom and arranged them in this order, he did the same thing in the practical part (of wisdom). He (Aristotle) divided it into things which pertain to man himself and things which pertain to other subjects. This second div-

1. "De Plantis is of all the Corpus, that which has had the most peculiar history. Aristotle seems, from references by himself, to have written a book on plants, but it had perished by the time of Alexander Aphrodisias, and the extant work is translated from a Latin translation of an Arabic translation of a work whose probable author is Nicolaus of Damascus, a peripatetic of the time of Augustus". (Ross, W.D., Aristotle, p.12).

2. These are sections of Aristotle's metaphysics, i.e. books A till... Book N.

ision is divided into two; one concerning the management of the house and the other concerning the management of cities. He composed a book on each of these arts. As to the book concerning things which pertain to man himself, it is his book on ethics which is a great work and of great benefit. It teaches how man can acquire virtuous talent and a praiseworthy disposition from which good actions and acceptable deeds emanate. As to his books on house and city management, they have not been translated into Arabic except for part of his book on city management¹ - this is our view - and it has been mentioned in the index of his books. In addition to these books, he has treatises and books which he called Memo-randa (De Memoria Et Reminiscentia)², and they are many as mentioned and related in the index of his works. He has written books on education³ as well, but they have not been translated (into Arabic). However, in the system which has been translated into Arabic and the order in which they have been arranged, there is great sufficiency and complete satisfaction for him who wants to perfect himself and aim at his end so that he can reach it quickly. As to the amount of time laid down for the person who wishes to learn wisdom as it has been set by this sage who has been generous and beneficent to us, it is in proportion to the person's care and interest

36. and other accidental aids, i.e. the person's being clever, having a retentive memory, being able to find books and a teacher to start the lessons with him, and having sufficient means so that he is not distracted from his endeavour, and the removal of the obstacles which man does not take into account, in the accidents and troub-

1. This is part of Aristotle's Politica.

2. This is part of Aristotle's Parva Naturalia which is a collective work on psychology (see Ross, Aristotle, p.11).

3. This is part of Rhetorica (Rhetoric).

les of life, diseases of the mind and body or their occurrence together, or the fear of the common people at one time and the fear of the ruler at other times, and the scrutiny of the townspeople. As someone once said, the people are the enemies of that which they do not know. They commonly conspire against people of virtue and show enmity to those who differ from them in their doctrines and purposes, and direct abuse and ill-treatment towards them. If he (the one who wants to gain wisdom) is free from these accidents and if the disposition and causes (for success) which we have mentioned are combined in him, he will reach his goal by a short path and will be free from the troubles of his fellow human beings and he will gain the stored-up treasures (of wisdom). It will take him approximately between ten and twenty years to acquire this knowledge, assuming that worldly affairs distract him to a certain degree. For we cannot imagine that a person will isolate himself and totally devote himself to knowledge and not give his body comfort and his soul a share of good and noble pleasures. If he were to do that he would lose his way and be prevented from reaching his end.

- Some of Aristotle's disciples and teachers of his books think that the teacher (of others) of them should start with the books of Ethics so that he may refine his soul first and become purified of the impurities of appetites. This will lessen its agitation by the accidents which come to it (the soul) and it will be
37. able to accept wisdom and acknowledge to some extent the the abandonment of indulgence in appetites and the leaving of bodily pleasures and know that most of these pleasures are despicable and base so that he can keep clear of them.

Then he should look into some of mathematics to get to know the method of demonstration and acquire proficiency in and familiarity with its methods. He should leave going deeper into the study of it to another time because he has yet a distant aim and a slow journey before him. Then he should look into logic which is a useful instrument for all the things he is aiming at. Then he should look into physics and metaphysics in the order we mentioned before.

If man reaches this final stage he will come to know the reality of things and he will be able to put them in their right places. Then his soul will form the (right) concepts of them, and if the soul forms concepts of the true facts of things he will be able to understand them completely rationally. If he understands things rationally, he will be able to form mental images and the images of accidents in natural things i.e. changeable objects, will disappear from his mind and he will obtain the images of mental eternal things. The mind will be united with these mental eternal images and they will be one and the same thing.

It is in the nature of the mind that its part becomes a universal as this becomes clear to him when he reaches it. When his soul departs from his body he will go to the second existence which is his final end
38. and his ultimate perfection. This state (of perfection) is very difficult to imagine, far from our daily observation and experience and one cannot talk about it, nor can it be attained in a way other than the one we illustrated. If we try to take similes for this state (of perfection) from every day experience there will be contradictions and impossibilities in these examples

because the example bears no relationship to what it represents. This is why we have not employed any. In any case I have composed a treatise (kalām) on this (state of perfection)¹ in which I have tried my best to make it clear as possible. If this section comes to the attention (of a reader) and is reread carefully and it makes possible (the understanding) of what comes after it. Then I know that it has (made) the impression which I intended in the first place, through the will and help of God.

There is no strength except by Him, He suffices us and is our best guardian. May peace be upon His Prophet Muhammad and all his family.

The Book is finished by the help of God the Exalted.

1. Reference here is made to Miskawayh's Treatise on al-Ladhdhāt wa-al-Ālām, where Miskawayh talks about different kinds of perfection. C.f. Badawī's Dirāsāt, pp.98-104.

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